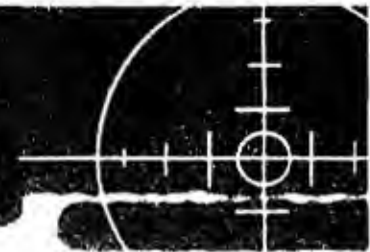


HIT SQUAD



Not many humanoids could roust the ultimate SEMANTIC TACTICIAN, THE DIDACTIC DESPOT OF VERBIAGE, and HAS BEEN PUNK IKON TESCO VEE from my completely self imposed journalistic fetal position..but then not everybody is JEFF BALE!! When informed of the lunatic fringe line-up he'd traversed the globe to assemble, the DUTCH HERCULES, hoping desperately to



fill the literary black hole of late, fell into formation with the his fellow SHOCK-TROOPERS..hell bent on goosestepping over every two bit crappy thing WE FUCKIN FEEL LIKE!!! It's so open ended..so open season..SO MANY ENEMIES... SO LITTLE TIME!! I'm in the SAME MAGAZINE AS KICKBOY-FACE, for shit's sake!! It was his CHRIS DESJARDINE's pen-

men-ship courtesy of SLASH Magazine back in the 70's that helped mold this moron into the Satan-Fearin', Satin Wearin' GOD OF WORDS I IS TODAY!! And thanks to this NEW and WONDERFULLY CRANKY MAG YOU HOLD IN YOUR GRUBBY, PUSSY STINKIN' PAWS...THERE IS HOPE!!! Good music AND GOOD WRITERS still exist. Even if it seems like you're

swimmin' thru an Olympic-sized full of turds in your regular, hopeless existences..once every so often the new HIT LIST will careen through your creative cranium, turning you ON AND OFF to all that is new!!! I'll be spinnin' platters and ratin' them on their merits! I will show you HOW A FUCKIN RECORD SHOULD BE REVIEWED. READ ON, KLONDIKES. Each issue I'll get a package of stuff, and then rank (on) it from best to worst.

totally Fuckin' Fuzzed Out, so this one gets Uncle Tesco's U.S.D.A CHOICE Pick-To Click" stateside..13 wonderous Romps Thru A Room Fulla Titties in your bare feet from 4 scumdogs from fuckin Australia..A +

2) THE MULLEN'S-"S/T" (Get Hip Records)
I'll reiterate..CRITICS are the lowest Sub-Genus of Sub-Species..Lower than ..the Hepatitis C waitin' for you in that piece o' shrimp..Lower than any girl that would date GG Allin...Lower than the IQ of HENRY ROLLINS..So for anyone to stand before you and declare any platter a hit or miss is preposterous. As THEE Headmaster in Northern Virginia's ROCK U. University, I teach daily of the Hazzards of Dismissal. Remember, I've been hunted down by TSOL..OK, so they beat up Brian Baker, thinking it was me. I mean THE MULLENS HERE JUST SPENT A FUCKIN' YEAR OF THEIR GODAMN LIVES CONCEPTUALIZING/ WRITING/RECORDING/PRODUCING/MASTERING (4 out of 5 ain't bad), and for any FAT ASS PETER DAVIS Lookin SUNUFUBEECH to have the audacity to.. with a wave of keypad.. show this fine band the door for sins against the GODS OF ROCK AND ROLL, BE THEY REAL OR IMAGINED....well, it just wouldn't be right. Gosh darn it I don't have too, cuz in case you haint noticed these guys came in second in the "WIN A DATE WITH THE LEZBO MORDAM EMPLOYEE OF YOUR CHOICE SWEEPSTAKES", and even though Get Hip's Promo budget dictates all I get is THE DISC I can't make fun of how they look...They live in Kosovo, I mean godawful Western PA, after all, but there's no denyin' when the old dutchman's size 15's start tappin' to distorted shit, recorded in their Uncle Clint's shack on a Wollensack 4 track, somebody's doin' something right

For MULLENS about to Rock, ahh say AMEN BRO! A-

These guys came in second in the "WIN A DATE WITH THE LEZBO MORDAM EMPLOYEE OF YOUR CHOICE SWEEPSTAKES", and even though Get Hip's Promo budget dictates all I get is THE DISC I can't make fun of how they look.

3) PILSNER-"AUTOSUGGESTION" (Get Hip)
Again? Prolific little peckers at this label, yet another respectable R&R venture. (If I like EVERYTHING my street-cred is blown..somebody on this list is gonna get it.) It is indeed heartening to know so many lads choose to paddle upstream against the Niagra of current trends. Bald faced rock-in-out like it used to be when people had the time of their life goin' to the rock show, gettin' pie eyed and then moonstomped, and loose tooth laughed about it all the next day. (What a BUNCH OF PUSSIES we're stuck with

nowadays.) Undaunted bands like this continue pumping blue collar aggro as if oblivious to the tides of change that threaten to wash anything with ballsack asunder..Throw away your crappy little NOFX Records and buy this ! B

4) NASHVILLE PUSSY-Anything
If Rock and Roll ain't dead then it's the Italian guy in a Clint

1) THE CRUSADERS-"FAT, DRUNK, and STUPID" (Dionysus Records)

Aussie A-Holes pissed to the gills take numero uno in this column's Boss Olympics..Big and Crusty, Stompin'-some-Sissy-in-the-Moshpit brand crude..Operating in tha: 60's/70's Keep it Simple, Stupid, and Crank-it-up Mindset, toss in a dose of late 90's sledgehammer panache. These Clydes also get bonus points for the cool 7th Century "I cut me a neu shuurt off'n that DEAD CATHOLIC's lifeless trunk" White Cross Band Uniforms, and it's

Eastwood Spaghetti Western, legs all shot up and draggin' himself across the desert. Buzzards boldly gouging mouthfulls of flesh and spittin' the slugs back into the sand. The hot sun bakes the parched carcass, as life and blood leech into the arid dust. Then waltzes in these freakazoids, get THEIR ASSES signed, and seem poised to take some sort of heavyweight crown. But who has got an appetite for this raunch and roll? ME ME ME!!! THESE GUYS AND GALS REALLY DO FUCKIN' KICK ASS!!, and all I can hope is that YOU STUPID FUCKING STATUES WITH SHIT FOR BRAINS AND EVEN WORSE FOR TASTE WILL RUSH OUT AND BUY THIS. If your idea of a hot n' happenin saturday nite is smashing 24 long necks against a double wide and suckin' a drunk outa the dirt, and negative demerits for major label signing notwithstanding, this is as good as it gets. They should cover Johnny Cash's "A Boy Named Sue", and please don't ask me why...A + + +

5) GARDY LOO, featuring EL DUCE-"PERVERTS ON PARADE" (Off The Records)

OK, you all know the real story of how the ULTIMATE SOD EL DUCE met his maker, right? You see the factory can only make so much "Olde English 800" and DUCE was puttin' a hurt on all the Brothers' Fortified Beverage of choice, ya know what I'm sayin? So some boys from the hood commandeered that southbound out of Bakersfield hellbent on Squashin' EL's Big Honkey Ass and thereby restoring the Suds River To South Central. Well their evil little scheme worked and the annoying alcoholic who wrote songs sorta like mine but with the brains knocked outa them..no longer walks the planet. And really the world is a better place without him, much as I enjoyed our little meeting where he would thrill me with witticism's like "Tesco ya see yer a sickwad...But I'm a scumbag", and the next line would invariably be "Any bumpers of malt I might inhale around these parts?" Oh ya, this record. Florida's Mighty GARDY LOO give EL the best Backup band he

TESCOVEE

ever had. Lots of odes to cornholing grandmas and Pooping...what's not to like? MENTORS fans and the initiated will groove. The rest of you should go die anyway...A

6) SNUBNOSE-"S/T" (Sin City Records)

Novel concept...They painted the tune titles on rusting hulks at the junk yard and then make a little game out of it by puttin' track #'s on the discs. Kept me busy, but I kept losing my focus on the task at hand. Kind of like when you realize you read 20 pages of a book and were thinkin' about somethin else...C-

7) DENIZ TEK-"EQUINOX" (Citadel Records)

Remember RADIO BIRDMAN? 70's thang from down under. Didn't they put out a domestic on Sire? This guy was RB. AHH, the 70's. You know one of my greatest regrets? I was at a keg party in Mich in 73 and we heard the Fuckin' NEW YORK DOLLS, who were playing outside at the Lansing Drive Inn, and we didn't fuckin' go!! Somebody shoot me!!! THE NEW YORK DOLLS!! The 70's were the most wonderous musical decade ever, but I'll save that soap-box oratory for a later column. And I'll let you fans of "progressive I-dont-know-what-the-fuck-this-is" try to decipher THIS CD. Life's too short and I gotta make poopy...D

Till we meet again...All my turds. ⊕

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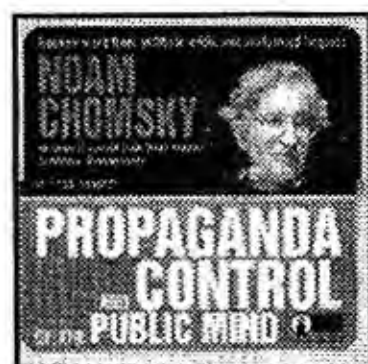
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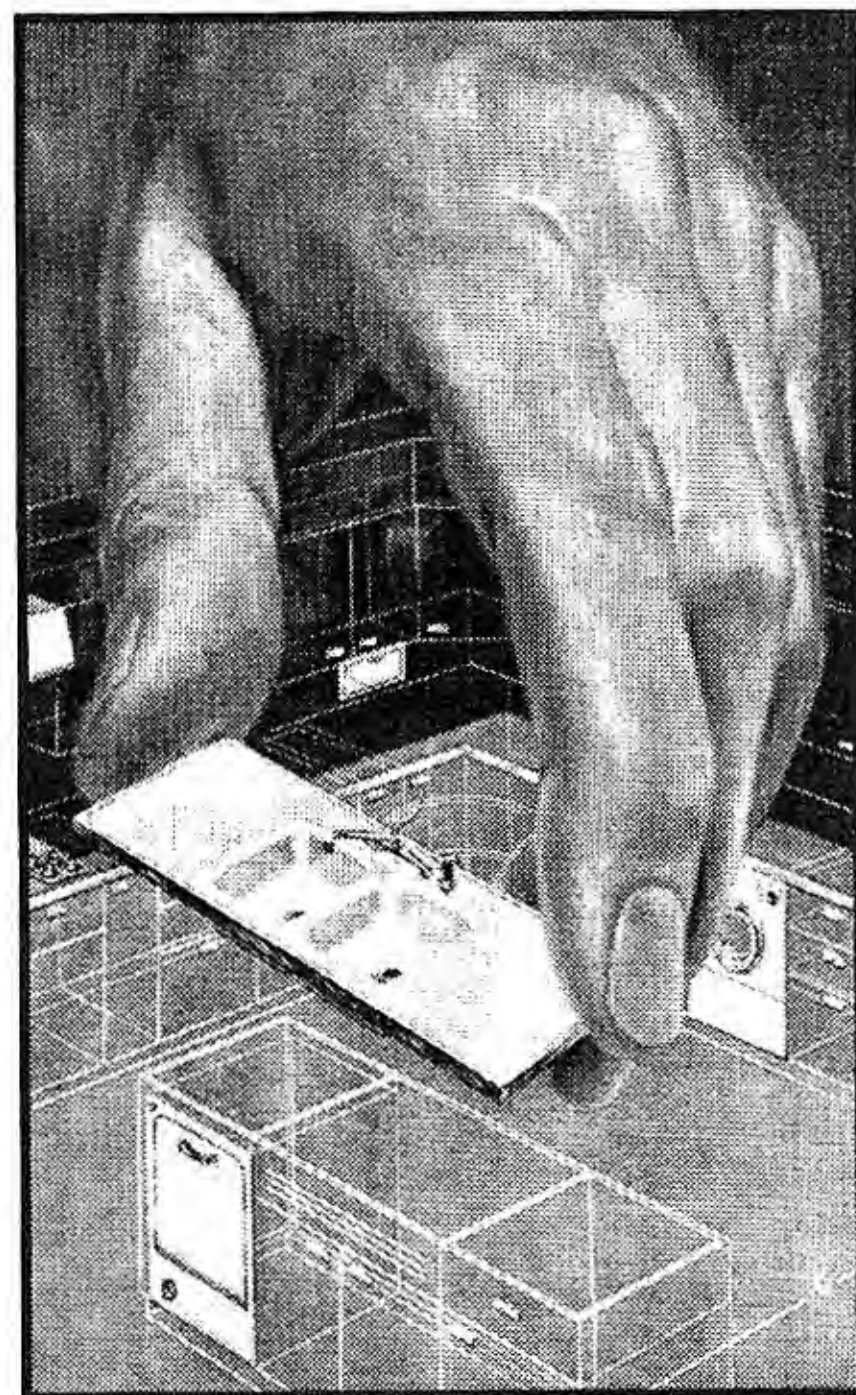
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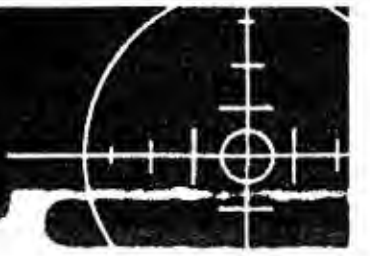
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I'm sorry that I can't provide a header with a picture of me for this column, but it was on short notice and I didn't have a camera. I went into Kinko's and pressed my face against a photocopy machine, but all the copies came out crappy. I didn't pay for them. The people who work there sure have a bad attitude. They actually expected me to pay for all the copies, like it wasn't the fault of their machines. Oh right, I guess there's something wrong with me, maybe a birth defect or something, and I just don't



photocopy well. Anyway, I'm a middle aged white guy about 5' 10", with glasses. Does that sound like something you really want to see a picture of? I didn't think so.

I wanted to write a column in the historic first issue of *Hit List* because I was one of the guys who started this zine along with Jeff and Brett. I'm no longer a partner in the zine, since I'm publishing a zine of my own called *Shredding Paper*. I came up with the names for both zines, and when it came to deciding who would get which name, Jeff and Brett were kind enough to allow me to pick second. One of the reasons I started *Hit List*

is because I hate *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll*. What were the other reasons? Well, for me there were actually no other reasons.

This column is now going to change subject matter. Bear with me, and at the end it will all make sense.

The politics surrounding the Republicans' attempt to remove Clinton from office during the last year has been thoroughly repugnant. The Republicans love to hide behind the constitution. Like the old saying, "Patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels". The only time any Republican ever reads the constitution is when they're searching for loopholes. If the Republicans did read the constitution they'd be shocked to discover that in America an individual is considered innocent until proven otherwise. Under our system, and basic principles of fairness,

no one can be found guilty without specific charges being alleged. It's impossible for an innocent person to defend themselves, unless they are told exactly what they are being accused of. What the Republicans are guilty of is McCarthyism, which is one of the worst evils that exists in our society. McCarthyism has been responsible for some of the ugliest smear campaigns in our nation ever since World War Two ended. At that point the McCarthyites (including Nixon) picked up where the Nazis left off, terrorizing innocent Americans, mainly Jews, with accusations that they were, or had been, members of the Communist Party, even though that would have been perfectly legal, and in fact those individuals had every right to be members of whatever political party they wanted. There's no law against having views that aren't held by the majority. [Ed.—no there isn't, but perhaps there should be for actively supporting a semi-clandestine organization conducting espionage and otherwise operating in the service of a hostile foreign power, which is as true of the CPUSA as it was of the German-American Bund.] In the past year the Republicans demanded that Clinton admit to a crime, and that he resign, even though he's made it clear he believes he hasn't committed a crime, and the Republicans have never made specific alle-

gations which can be proven. The Republicans don't need to worry about doing what is right, they are in the majority.

What's this got to do with me? Well in the past year I went through a personal experience that was surprisingly similar to impeach-

ment. For more than 10 years I had worked for a local zine called *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll*. In April, my friend and editor of *MRR*, Tim Yohannan, died of cancer. Shortly after that I was contacted by a band who had been close to Tim, and had recently helped Tim and the magazine a lot. The band complained to me that after Tim died the new editor, Jacqueline Prichard, had refused to run an ad the band had listing their upcoming tour dates. The band also complained that Jacqueline treated them in an insulting manner. I agreed to talk to Jacqueline on their behalf. My talk with her convinced me that the band had been totally justified in their complaint. I brought the problem to the attention of *MRR*'s new corporate style Board of Directors, whose collective response was that Jacqueline could do whatever she wanted. Following this incident

If the present day MRR stands for anything...[it's] a mindless and pathetic brand of conformity. Conformity in the name of rebellion?

Jacqueline went out of her way to create additional conflicts with me. I was asked to meet with the board again and agreed, hoping that at least one of the individuals that Tim had trusted might have some insight into how the problem could best be resolved. Instead all the members of the board simply fell into line with their apparent leader, Timojhen Mark, and fired me. Timojhen Mark and his gang of sheep who now control *MRR* equate punk rock with a mindless and pathetic brand of conformity. If the present day *MRR* stands for anything, that's it. Conformity in the name of rebellion!? Give me a fucking break! Like with Clinton, I was never told what I was accused of. Despite that, Timojhen suggested that I resign. Martin Sprouse suggested that I admit to wrongdoing, saying that everyone else at the meeting had admitted to wrongdoing, and that I was the only one who hadn't "owned up to anything". When I did not admit to wrongdoing, I was fired. So that's how *MRR* treats someone who's done a great job for them for 10 years. It makes you wonder what level of McCarthyism they might subject outsiders to.

That brings us to the latest issue of *MRR*, number 188. In Jacqueline's column she senselessly attacks a number of innocent people. The source of her displeasure is that she chose to attend a business convention hosted by her magazine's distributor, and then was upset that most of the discussions that took place related to business. If Jacqueline went to the World Series I guess she'd proba-

MELCHELOWITZ

bly come back complaining that the people there just seemed interested in baseball. She used the following words in her attack on one well respected indie label head; "Punk broke in '94, so you're too late for that gravy train. If you want to get rich, buy some funky fresh fashions and co-opt someone else's scene for awhile, then rest in shit vomit, stupid ass, sell out fuckers..." Attacking people solely because they might be "rich"?! Does that make sense to you? It sure doesn't make any sense to me. Obviously there are rich people who are admirable, and poor people who are scum. I'd like to say that it is the responsibility of every staff member at *MRR* to work to end the magazine's bigotry in the name of punk, regardless of how Jacqueline and the gang of sheep feel about it. Until that happens we should all boycott *MRR*. If you're a reader, stop buying it. If you're an advertiser, stop advertising. Let's send a message to the new gang at *MRR* that there's nothing "punk" about inheriting half a million dollars worth of publishing resources and using it to victimize innocent people. ⊕

Some of Mel's old Maximum columns can be found on the Shredding Paper web site at: WWW.INFOASIS.COM/PEOPLE/AMPOP/SP.HTML

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Imagine that it's pretty unhealthy, just sitting here, thinking such hateful thoughts and feeling so good about them, feeding them with all kinds of exaggerations and elaborate variations. Actually, to be honest I'm really enjoying them. I know it's not a "good" thing, in a moralistic sense, but it is real and it is honest, and I do know that is "good". And whether I like it or not it is completely out of my control. So what the fuck, why not just bask in the warm glow of my own contempt.

Sometimes it's just a simmering feeling, centered more in the upper part of my body, shifting all by itself from abstract thought to a more solid form of tangible emotion, rising up into the subconscious part of my



mind, comfortably nestling there, all at once, finding itself a welcome home, while simultaneously "injuring" me, digging its claws or hooks or whatever the fuck

it's using nowadays to tighten its grip on my presently forming memories and leaving me a victim of its not completely unwanted presence. Other times it emanates outward from my heart of hearts, flowing freely, unobstructed by the burdens of reason or logic, finding its form this time in what can only be defined as rage, a wild outburst, something that is very akin to joy so far as human expression goes. I must admit to liking the rage much better than the former, but at the same time I

understand it is much more dangerous and needs to be controlled tightly. So I do.

I really, really do hate that motherfuckin' faggot, though. (Note: if you're an individual who still thinks that the word "faggot" has anything to do with homosexuality, please take one giant leap into the present...on your

marks, get set...go!...good, nice to meet you, thanks for coming...words and their meanings change with time, and just for the record I don't think this faggot fucks his mother, either.

His name is Mark, and he is my neighbor. Not next-door, but the second house over.

And although I have hated others in the past much more

than I hate him, never have I hated anyone so severely for so little. After all, he's practically a complete stranger. I've never had a conversation with him and, as a matter of fact, I just realized that I don't even know what his voice sounds like. Nor would I recognize him in public.

So I guess you might say that I hate him from afar.

Nevertheless, I hate that ass-kissing, spa-tanned, mother-fucking faggot with a passion. He is a metaphor of sorts for many of the things that I really hate about people and more precisely people of my generation, the people (whom I believe are in the majority) that form a worldview at around age twenty and then cling to it for dear life until they croak. It is those people precisely who are directly to blame for making your short stay here mostly a uncomfortable one. If you're not mostly uncomfortable, then you're probably one of them, and therefore, have no business nosing around in our private little "fuck you" club during your mostly disposable years.

I have heard tell that Mark is a couple of years my junior. I received this little tidbit of information from the girl next door, to whom I like to talk with from time to time, even though our conversations do tend to focus more on her mental illness than mine. I tolerate her self indulgence for several reasons: number one, she's a schizophrenic and that keeps the topics interesting, and number two, she's an angry person who's usually full of piss and vinegar, as well as a 6- or 12-pack of "Miller". Finally, she has this wonderful tendency to wear extremely loose fitting tops with no bra so that when she leans over the fence to talk to me, I get a perfect view of her tits, which are really nice tits as far as tits go. They're not very large tits, but they are shapely ones. They also have that really cool "pouty" look that I find very attractive in a tit and,

though I'm not much of a tit man, she has silver dollar sized aureolas surrounding the nipples on her tits and I'm a big fan of big dark aureolas. So I think that it's reasonable for me to say that I consider her a "good neighbor".

Nevertheless, this Salingeresque digression was intended to briefly illustrate just how

surrounded by hateful things that I am, and not to talk about the girl next door, since I don't consider her a hateful thing but rather a pleasant one. However, I do hate her Mother.

One day while carrying an armload of packages into my house and attempting to locate the proper set of keys, I quite loudly and vociferously began to abuse gravity, since it had

Note: if you're an individual who still thinks that the word "faggot" has anything to do with homosexuality, please take one giant leap into the present...on your marks, get set...go!...good, nice to meet you, thanks for coming.

just sucked my entire cache of goods downwards and left them scattered and broken upon the cement. Now even though it wouldn't have mattered at all if I would have noticed the girl next door's Mother's big ugly fat fucking ass sticking out of the bushes as she pawed at the weeds with the crooked little stumps that stick out of her arms and seem to function as a piss poor excuse for fingers, I guess that I offended her with my terse expletives since it seems that she felt that it somehow now entitled her to speak to me with a "reprimanding" tone. She bellowed forth, "watch your mouth, Joseph". I was sickened by the thought that she even knew my name, and was even more disgusted that she would be so bold as to use it, so I told her to "suck my dick". Then she started to wobble on over to me hollering something about calling the police, so I slammed the door in her face full of chins.

The girl next door's mother is friends with Mark. So, as you can probably see by now, I'm dealing with a tangled little conspiracy of sorts.

The girl next door's Mother sold Mark her recently deceased husband's riding lawnmower, and a big part of why I hate him so much is simply for the reason that he rides that stupid thing around in his yard every day, or so it seems and...well...it's something about the way he whips around the trees in his yard, with his backwards baseball cap and his faggot ass perched atop that bright shiny red lawn tool, as though he's really cool or carrying out some daring stunt.

Godamnit, I really hate that fuckin' bastard.

There are so many more reasons why I hate "Mark the Big Faggot", but the incident that follows was the clincher of all clinchers for me...it was the cherry on top, the straw that broke the camel's back, and the proverbial nipple on the tit.

I'm outside changing the flat rear passenger side tire on my van. It was a nice sunny day. During the summer, "The Village" found it necessary to tear up all of the sidewalks in front of the houses on my block. Mark's cement had just been poured a little while earlier, so it was still wet. Keep in mind that neither Mark nor the contractors put up any barrier or indication to denote the condition of the still-wet cement.

Along come these two unsuspecting little kids, somewhere between five and seven years old, riding their bikes past me first, on their way towards Mark's wet cement. I looked up from what I was doing, but it happened too fast for me to really process any information or to say anything. So the kids rode their bikes right into Mark's wet cement. They fell off of their bikes, front tires about halfway submerged in Mark's wet cement. I'm sure they were already freaked out being

physically stuck in Mark's wet cement. Just then big fag cunt motherfucking bitchy Mark bursts out of his front door, leaps over his stairs, and sprints the ten feet or so to where the little kids are still lying. The "King of Fags" grabs them by their shirt collars and starts shaking them around like rag dolls. By now the kids are bawling, but he keeps screaming his lungs out, right up in their faces, jerking them around, just being a total fucking dickless piece of shit about the whole thing.

I had my hatchet in hand since I was using it to fix my tire, but wisely I suppressed the impulse to run over there and bury it in Mark's head, like he deserved. Then the faggot did one of the shittiest things an adult can do to a little kid, that motherfucker called the cops on them. What a big motherfucking faggot. I swear to god.

By now you oughtta be hating Mark as much as I do, cause if you don't you're probably a big motherfucking faggot as well.

The point here is that Mark and people like him piss me off so much because they represent to me how soon people my age and even younger seem to forget what it felt like to be a little kid. Shit, it seems that even the kids are forgetting how to be kids.

So a nice summer memory was destroyed for two little kids that day, and in its place was this fucked up experience with Mark the motherfucking faggot.

This is a major fucking tragedy in my book, since you have a very limited amount on nice summer days to spend as a kid in life. Period. The clock is always

ticking. Now these poor kids run the risk of growing up to be motherfucking faggots too.

There are other things that Mark the fag could have done, but he made a conscious decision to take the previously described course of action. Mark the fag could have very easily just called "The Village" and said, "it looks like some kids rode their bikes into my wet cement, could you come over and fix it"? I'm sure they wouldn't have said "no way, 'Big Motherfucking Faggot Mark'. How could you have let those little trixters slip through your faggot fingers? You should have grabbed them by the throats and throttled them like the big motherfucking pussy you truly are and then called the cops. You really dropped the ball on this one, it looks like you're gonna have to fix your own fuckin' sidewalk. Sorry, bitchieboy."

Anyway, the stupid cops come and so do the kids' parents. Then they go off with their Dads in their respective cars, probably to go home, get bitched at some more, and then get grounded, all because of Mark the big stupid motherfucking fag.

HIT SQUAD

Instead, they should have arrested Mark the faggot for assaulting the two little kids. But what really "should" happen, rarely does.

What spineless parents those kids must have, letting that faggot get away with laying his fucking hands on them.

But here's the good part. A few days later I'm walking past Mark's house, and right there on the very same cement that makes up Mark's new sidewalk, I see the word "hell" scratched into it. Then it looks like someone else, in order to go "one up" on the "hell" scraping guy, scrawled the word "fuck" into Mark's new sidewalk, and in bigger letters too.

I like to think that it was those same two kids who came back to seek out their revenge. But who knows?

The point here is that Mark and people like him piss me off so much because they represent to me how soon people my age and even younger seem to forget what it felt like to be a little kid. Shit, it seems that even the kids are forgetting how to be kids.

I've noticed that at punk rock shows. On the rare occasion that I do go out and see a band play, I feel like I'm going to a Cub Scout Bake Sale instead of a rockin'roll show. Everyone just seems so subdued. [Ed.—you can thank lame places like Gilman for that, with their romper room atmospheres and all their dumb fucking rules!]

I'm aware that this is really a shitty time in American his-

tory to be a kid, but if you're bored it's only because you're boring.

Personally, I can't even imagine boredom. As a matter of a fact my biggest fear is that I won't get to do everything I'd like to do before I kick.

So I just don't go to shows very often because I end up getting depressed and longing for the "olde days", back when the clubs were dark and foreboding, when the scents of fresh sweat, hot leather, and way too much hairspray commingled together and created a smell that was punk rock's own, when you could walk in to a bathroom and see one guy on his knees barfing his soul out in stall one, some hot punk chick on her knees giving head to a lucky recipient in stall two and finally, upon reaching the rear of the latrine, cop a couple of Quaaludes to go. I tend to be kind of romantic when I think about that period of my life. It's the closest that I've ever come to being "happy" so far. I've been "glad", I've had "fun", I've experienced "pleasure" and even moments of "bliss". But nothing that lasts too long.

So instead, here I sit gazing out of my panoramic third floor lower middle class apartment building situated on the edge of Chicago's suburbia, watching my motherfucking moronic faggot neighbor Mark blowing his leaves around. I really hate leaf blowers, and the people who own them.

I often fantasize about shooting Mark from this very window, but it's just a thought and you gotta keep those feelings inside. So I do.

Joey Vindictive: Wed. Dec. 16, 1998 ⊕



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FASTBACKS

FASTBACK



FASTBACKS

FASTBACKS

Much has been written about Seattle's Fastbacks throughout their almost 20-year history. Most articles tend to focus on recent events surrounding the band, while only briefly skimming the surface behind their origins and early history. It is a fascinating journalistic challenge to understand their personal dynamics, and how these interactions played a vital part in defining their storied career. This means going beyond describing Kurt Bloch's talent for playing guitar solos while jumping up and down, or how the slightly out-of-tune vocals of Kim Warnick and Lulu Gargiulo are 'endearing' or 'charming' (or, god forbid, how they've averaged a different drummer every 1.5 years). My holistic conclusion is that these are three people who cre-

ated and comprise an extremely dysfunctional family, but who refuse to give up or bow down to conventional musical trends. In the end, it's a story about three people who genuinely love rock music so much that fame, fortune and musical proficiency have always taken a back seat to creating quality music.

[I would like to thank the Fastbacks for their cooperation in the research for this article. My information was culled from six separate interview sessions I did with Kurt, Kim, and Lulu on a one-on-one basis. If you are not familiar with the Fastbacks, this article may read a little like a history lesson or a story. I hope it can be entertaining, and maybe spark a new interest in this incredible band. For those of you familiar with the Fastbacks, I intend to place their body of work within a whole new context, maybe to achieve a better understanding of the Fastbacks as a family, not just as a band or recording. At the very least, I hope this information seems funny and enjoyable to all the readers.]

KURT THOMAS BLOCH - Born in Seattle, 8/28/60
The son of a Boeing engineer, Kurt grew up the oldest son of 4 kids (1 older sister, 2 younger brothers). His mother, Lila, was a very social and ami-

able mom, akin to a big friendly German grandmother; super friendly, but also a bit off-kilter. Kurt's father, while not quite the antithesis of his mother, was a very private man. According to Lulu, Joseph Bloch was a genius and an inventor. Unfortunately, he also could be intimidating because of his lack of social grace.

Kurt Bloch has always been a fan of music. His first instrument was the violin, which he picked up in the fourth grade. Due to various factors that retarded his musical progress, he never got very good at the instrument. Around the same time he also took piano lessons, but his elementary school had neither band nor orchestra, so there was no incentive or excuse for him to practice or get good. At one point, he even tried his hand at saxo-

phone, but was discouraged

by a nasty neighbor who worked the night shift. One afternoon when she was trying to get some sleep, she banged on Kurt's front door and told him that his sax playing sounded 'horrible'. Nonetheless, Kurt loved music so much that he continued to take piano lessons into junior high school. His junior high piano instructor used to encourage students to bring in pieces of popular music to learn. Taking her up on this offer, Kurt brought in Deep Purple's "Made In Japan", and proceeded to learn a piano version of "Smoke on the Water".

As a freshman in high school, Kurt's first exposure to the guitar was in the form of a folk guitar class at Nathan Hale High School. He borrowed his sister's acoustic guitar and would bring it to school every day. At this point in his life, Kurt was listening to a lot of hard rock and art rock. Bands such as Deep Purple, Queen, King Crimson, AC/DC, UFO, Judas Priest, the Scorpions and Blue Oyster Cult were/became staples of his musical diet, and he would

devour their records with reverence. Previous to the hard rock explosion of the early 70's, Kurt loved 60's pop music, and it was not uncommon for him to spend ALL of his lunch money and allowance on records (keep in mind that this was 1974, a few years before punk rock was even introduced). These myriad influences, along with punk later on, forged the crux of his approach to music, and invariably shaped the huge sonic canvas he would create.

During Christmas of 1974, Kurt got his first electric guitar, a black "Pan" brand SG copy. His first amp was soon given to him by his father. It was an impressive looking transistor amp which Kurt promptly blew out the first time he fired it up.

He recalls always having a passion

for practicing and work-

ing on guitars. His second guitar was a Univox ES-335 copy. Kurt would eventually remove the pick-ups from this guitar and install them into his Pan SG with a hammer and chisel. But his first 'good' guitar purchase was a '67 Gibson SG Special in 1980, which he purchased for \$265 with money he made from working at local Seattle record stores. According to Kurt, it was "well worth the money", and it was this guitar that was later pictured on the first Fastbacks single). Since then, he has amassed a huge collection of vintage guitars—somewhere in the neighborhood or 30 or 40.

Kurt loved punk rock from the start. The first punk songs he ever heard were "Neat Neat Neat" by the Damned and "I Wanna Be Me" by the Sex Pistols (the b-side of the "Anarchy In the UK" single). "Punk was all we could ask for in music: Loud. Fast. Just pounding idiotic music. Super kick-ass. Great. Cool." For the first few years that Kurt

by Scott Lee

played electric guitar he was mostly discouraged by the sophistication of the guitar players he admired. Axe slingers like Robert Fripp, Brian May, and Ritchie Blackmore seemed so out of reach for him, both in terms of being able to play what they were playing, as

"Better Than Sthrempf Cocktail" part 1 (1959-1981)



well as being able to get the same kind of sound out of his guitar and amp. Punk, however, was so simple that it encouraged Kurt to become a better guitarist. Not only was it easier to figure out "Do the Robot" by the Saints than "Fracture" by King Crimson, but the power of the music really captivated him. Punk rock was the ultimate in music, and was harder, faster, and louder than anything else.

According to Kurt, the Ramones were "unbelievable." Much of Kurt's proficiency with the guitar was gained through playing along with "It's Alive". For Kurt, this record and "In Color" by Cheap Trick were especially great albums to play along with. Their common strength was that they had one great song after another ("In Color" was the best record for him to 'tune' his guitar to, since the opening track just starts with an A chord and nothing else). It was never a matter of being able to play rhythm or lead guitar, because for Kurt the two were inseparable. It was always just about playing guitar and having fun. Punk rock opened up the doors for him to become a better guitarist, and subsequently he was able to apply these lessons to understanding and deciphering the more 'sophisticated' music of his childhood. This amalgamation of guitar genres would ultimately define his lead and rhythm styles, as evidenced by such epics as "Better Than Before" and "Banner Year", as well as the straightforward punk bliss

Marge, was the classic TV homemaker in the mold of June Cleaver, except for the fact that she stocked the Warnick household with every imaginable form of junk food invented. Lulu remembers going over to their house during the summers to go swimming, and how Kim's mom would allow them to eat anything, anytime. Kim's brother, Kyle, was named after a boy that she had a crush on in the 5th grade (someone she would chase around the classroom in an attempt to remove his glasses).



Growing up, Kim was somewhat of a reckless attention seeker. Being an only child until her teens, she was used to getting her way and being the center of attention. She has some GREAT sto-

band that she loved the most.

Kim got her first guitar and amp for her 18th birthday. In actuality, these were purchased as a 30-day rental, probably due to the fact that her parents knew that Kim's attention span for things was less than reliable during her adolescence.

Soon after she received it, Kim's little Fender Champ amplifier was promptly blown out by Kurt and Al (Kurt's younger brother, and future frontman of My Favorite Martian). But Kim stuck with the guitar, mostly because of the Runaways, but also because of the Ramones (when all is said and done, the Ramones and Queen are the two bands that really made the Fastbacks possible). With the Ramones and the Runaways, Kim found bands that in her estimation were not very good at their instruments, but who were getting popular. She figured she could do it too. Her first impression of the Ramones debut LP, however, was less than earth-shattering. She remembers hearing Rodney Bingenheimer describe the first Ramones LP as a 'speed trip on vinyl'. But

when she put it on for the first time, she didn't hear any guitar solos. Back then, the rock music she loved always had guitar solos. She vividly remembers moving the needle from her record

player and skipping from song to song, trying to find a guitar solo. None could be found.

Eventually, however, the record began to sink in, and she took a fondness to its simplicity and irreverence. To this day Dee Dee Ramone remains her biggest influ-

ence as a bass player. Kim has never cared for playing complicated bass lines, and in Dee Dee Ramone she found the basics she loved about playing bass. She never has, and never will care about playing anything more, or anything less, than that which is simple and direct.

Once Kim started listening to punk, she would attend all the punk rock shows that came through town.

[Kim] vividly remembers moving the needle from her record player and skipping from song to song [on the first Ramones LP], trying to find a guitar solo. None could be found.

of "I'm Cold" and "Gone To the Moon".

KIMBERLY ANN WARNICK - Born in Seattle, 4/7/59

By all accounts, Kim was a spoiled only child for the first 12 years of her life. Her parents were classic examples of the postwar generation. They threw block martini parties at their house most nights of the week. Kim's father, John, was a banker. Her mother,

ries from her childhood. As far as her musical development is concerned, her first influences were artists who had TV shows, such as Bobby Sherman, the Monkees, and David Cassidy. Later on she became an avid fan of more kick-ass rock (Queen, AC/DC and Blue Oyster Cult), along with other forms of pop and glam music (the Jackson 5, Roxy Music, and David Bowie). The Runaways, however, were probably the

According to Kurt, the litmus test for a Seattle punker was whether or not he/she attended the Ramones show at the Olympic Hotel (later to be the Four Seasons Hotel). Kim and Lulu were at this show, Kurt was not. Kim remembers also going to see bands from England such as Magazine and the Buzzcocks. The loudest show she ever saw was the Clash at the Paramount Theater during the "Give 'Em Enough Rope" tour. She remembers sneaking up the fire escape to get into the show (a common practice for admission to shows and movies for all three Fastbacks). She also remembers laughing at Mick Jones when he told her that the next Clash record would be a double album. To her, no punk band would ever make a double album. She thought he was joking! Little did she know that he was talking about what was to be "London Calling".

The first band Kim ever played in was a new wave punk band called the Radios. This was her first exposure to playing bass (her first bass was a Gibson Ripper). The Radios are mostly notable due to her inclusion, as well as the fact that the drummer, Chris Utting (later Criss Crass), would go on to join L.A. pop punkers The Muffs.

MICHILU SUZETTE GARGIULO - Born in Seattle at N.W. Hospital, 10/12/60 Robert Gargiulo was in the merchant marine and stationed in Japan when he met his future wife Michiyo. They ended up moving to the Pacific Northwest and starting a family. Lulu is the youngest of 3 kids, with an older sister (Maria) and brother (Tony).

Consisting of half Japanese and half Italian ancestry (with also a mixture of Swedish, French and Irish blood), the Gargiulo household was a modest blue collar family. Robert was a streamroller operator who paved asphalt, while Michiyo became a waitress after Lulu was born. Although her parents were very affectionate people, they also had their own dysfunctions which ultimately led to Lulu becoming an extremely independent person. This DIY ethic would prove to be both an asset and a detriment in the years to come.

Although younger than Kurt and Kim, Lulu began her musical studies before either of them. She took classical guitar lessons at the age of 7 (which she refers to as lessons in 'Pauper'

music) which mostly centered around scales and music theory. As we would discover later, her learning scales on the guitar would prove practically useless in connection with her role in the Fastbacks. Lulu also took night school group lessons in folk guitar with her cousin Shannon Wood (Lulu's best friend during childhood, who only lived 12 blocks away, as did most of Lulu's relatives on her father's side). After these lessons ended, Lulu didn't really practice or continue playing guitar with very much enthusiasm. In fact, once she joined the Fastbacks, playing the guitar was just like learning from scratch all over again. She remembered how to play open A, E, and D chords, but bar chords were unfamiliar to her. Lulu's first electric was purchased just prior to the formation of the Fastbacks. It was a crappy sounding Moserite copy which she played through a little Fender Champ.

In school, Lulu tended to get into trouble often for talking in class. She also had an advanced fashion sense, often incorporating suspenders and big hats into her daily outfits. She also had a rather big "Afro". Her favorite class in high school was photography, a class she was able to take for two consecutive years. After her first semester of photography, Lulu stopped attending the lectures and would immediately head for the darkroom, much to the dismay of her teacher, Mr. Hoy.

She also used to bring in a little portable tape player to class and listen to loud music while working in the darkroom. To say Lulu was a character would be an understatement. At the time she met Kurt, she wasn't really into hard rock, but liked music more along the lines of teeny bopper pop music. But the bands she had in common with Kurt were Queen and the Ramones, and she would often come to photography class to develop pictures she took at rock shows, which inevitably led to her meeting Kurt.

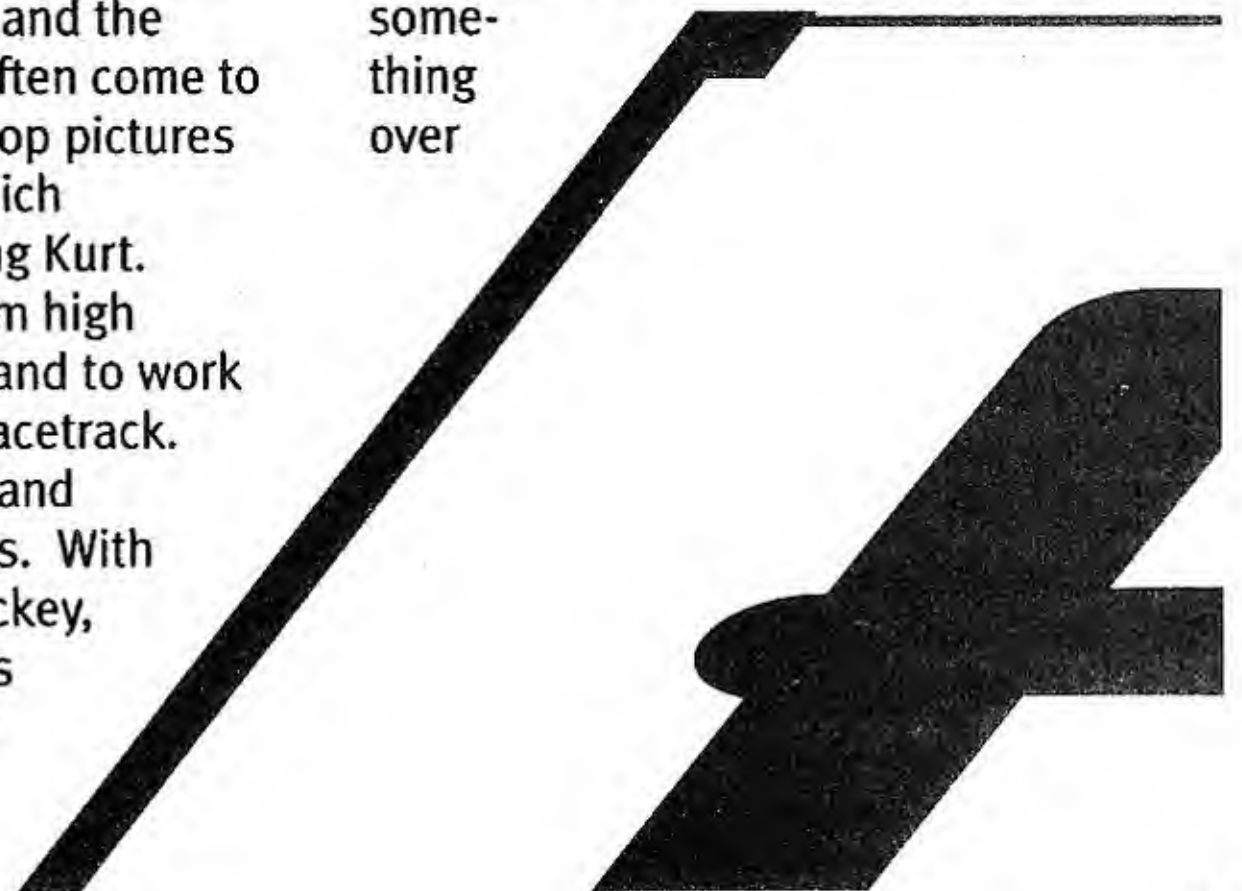
After Lulu graduated from high school, she moved to Portland to work at the Portland Meadows racetrack. Her job involved caring for and cleaning up after the horses. With aspirations to become a jockey, Lulu lived out of the stables and worked 7 days a week (starting at 5 AM). She did this for about 6

months and then moved back to Seattle. In Seattle, she worked at another racetrack, Longacres. After she finally quit a few months later, Lulu ended up renting a house with Kim and another friend, Randy "you're so full of fire" Fehr.

THE CHEATERS

Formed the summer of 1978, the Cheaters were Kurt's first real band. Previous to that point, he had tried unsuccessfully to put together a band that would actually do anything. The Cheaters consisted of Kurt on guitar, Al Bloch on bass, Scott Dittman on vocals, and Dave Shumate (pronounced Shoemate) on drums. Scott was someone who just wanted to be in a 'punk rock' band. He was a boy who loved to act New York "tough"; dressed in straight legged jeans, leather jacket, and sunglasses, he tried to be as punk as possible. In contrast, Dave was just someone who wanted to be in a band. Not exactly a fan or follower of punk rock, Dave sacrificed his personal musical tastes just to be part of a band. Just a year apart, Kurt and Al both grew up loving rock music and learning instruments together. Collectively, the four of them created a band that was "1/3 Sex Pistols, 1/3 Blue Oyster Cult, and 1/3 terrible."

The Cheaters were a band that didn't really know what they were doing. The one thing they all had in common was the desire to be in a band. As a result, they learned how to actually constitute a band by hanging out and trying to play together. No one knew how to write songs, let alone proficiently play their instruments. In order to write songs they would sit around in the basement of the Bloch house, play some chords, and have Scott sing something over



the progression. There was no defined vocal melody and there was no mapped-out chorus or bridge; it was all impromptu since they weren't even aware of what these devices were to begin with. The first Cheaters original was a song entitled, "Johnny



Get Your Gun".

Eventually, after many practices and learning what worked and what didn't work, the Cheaters managed to put together an array of originals and covers that would comprise their set list. Some of the covers included "Cars and Girls" by the Dictators, and "The Red and the Black" by Blue Oyster Cult. The original songs would eventually be credited to the band on their first and only single, but they were usually individual composi-

tions that incorporated few if any contributions from the other members.

With the Cheaters, Kurt was able to learn both what he could do and what he couldn't do when it came to being in a band. In many ways, the Cheaters were a learning experience for all of its members. As the only band from Nathan Hale that actually got their shit together (somewhat), they got 'good' enough to play shows at the Bird (the first Northwest punk rock club during the late 70's) and other local venues. Kurt remembers doing all sorts of stupid things in the Cheaters, such as gluing forks and knives to his guitar because he thought it would look funny. Little did he realize that when he would play, the guitar would cut up his arm. On another occasion, he thought it would be funny to play guitar with the back edge of a wood saw (a la Jimmy Page and the violin bow). At the show he just thought "fuck it," and proceeded to cut off all his strings with the blade side of the saw. It was funny, but after he did it the show was over since he didn't have an extra set of strings or a back-up guitar. The best laid plans . .

. The other members of the band didn't fare much better than Kurt. At one show, Scott threw hot dogs at the audience. That might have been funny, but what was even funnier was that the audience threw the hot dogs right back at the band. The stage became cluttered with hot dogs. It is rumored that this "treachery" led to at least one member slipping on a pork python.

The Cheaters stayed together for a little over a year, and then broke up in the Fall of 1979 after a farewell Halloween show. In the words of Kurt, "the Cheaters were pretty ambitious for how terrible we were."

NO THREES RECORDS

What started out as a bad joke turned into what became the No Threes record label. One day Kurt and some friends were altering a "NO LEFT TURN" street sign that they had acquired. They painted out the left turn arrow and placed a big "3" in its place. For some reason, they decided this was so funny that it had to be the insignia they would use if they ever released a record. No significance should be

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placed on the number 3, though, since it was a completely random choice.

Well, as word tends to travel fast, a band from Bellingham called the Accident caught wind of the No Threes concept. They asked Kurt if they could release a single on 'his label'. He tried to explain to them that it wasn't really a label to begin with, and that nothing had been released at that point. Regardless, the Accident were a bunch of go-getters, and so they funded a 7" for the No Threes label. The Accident's "Kill the Bee Gees" b/w "True Detective" (N3-001) was released in 1979, and No Threes was officially born.

Shortly thereafter (October 1979), the Cheaters released the second No Threes 7", featuring three songs ("Man As Hunter" b/w "I Talk To You"/"How Would You Like To Be The Ice Man?"). All the songs were recorded at Triangle Studios in Seattle, which was located near the Fremont/Ballard area. (It later turned into Reciprocal, and then into John and Stu's.). Kurt recalls finishing the sessions the same day that the Talking Heads played a show at the Egyptian Theater. He left the studio, snuck into the show and even taped it. One thousand copies of the Cheaters single were pressed, but only 600-700 would be available for purchase. 300-400 copies had to be sent back to the pressing plant due to poor labeling and manufacturing problems. A few weeks after they were sent back, the pressing plant went out of business. To add insult to injury, no refund was sent either.

No Threes would last until the early 90's, and the discography would end up looking something like this:

N3-001: *The Accident* - "Kill the Bee Gees" b/w "True Detective"

N3-002: *The Cheaters* - "Man As Hunter" b/w "I Talk To You" & "(How Would You Like To Be The) Ice Man?"

N3-004 (no 3): *The Vains* (featuring Duff McKagan and Criss Crass) - ""The Fake/The Loser/School Jerks" (both sides were marked Side B)

N3-005: *The Fastbacks* - "It's Your Birthday" b/w "You Can't Be Happy"

N3-006: *The Fastbacks* - "Play Five Of Their Favorites" EP

N3-007: *Silly Killers* - "Not That Time Again/Knife Manual/Social Bitch/Sissie

Faggots"

N3-008: *The Fastbacks* - "Every Day Is Saturday" EP

N3-009 (in cooperation with the Steve Priest Fan Club): *The Fastbacks* - "In the Summer/Everything I Don't Need/You Can't Be Happy (89)/Queen of Eyes"

N3-010: *Pure Joy* - "Sore Throat Ded Goat" EP

N3-011: *The Fastbacks* - "Very, Very Powerful Motor" LP (later released on Popllama, but originally slated for this No Threes

catalog number)

N3-012C: *The Fastbacks* - "Bike, Toy, Clock, Gift" (cassette)

THE ORIGINS OF THE FASTBACKS

Kim, Shannon and Kurt all graduated from high school in 1977. Lulu was a year behind. During the summer between her junior and senior year, Lulu began dating Scott Dittman. Kim had actually dated Scott when she was in the 9th grade. Kim met Lulu through their mutual friend Shannon Wood, and when Kim found out that Lulu was dating Scott, their acquaintance became more of a friendship. Kim would invite Lulu over to go swimming, and they would hang out at her house and go driving around in her mother's Grand Torino. Once the Cheaters got together, Kim and Lulu would go watch their rehearsals and then drive around with everyone afterwards. At that time, Kim was seeing Cheaters drummer Dave Shumate (who would later date Lulu). Eventually, even Al and Kim started seeing each other. (My Fastbacks conspiracy theory is that the reason they have been able to stay together as a band for so long is because Kurt was the only member of the Cheaters that Kim never dated.)

Anyway, everyone in their circle was very close. They would all spend the bulk of their time together. Eventually Dave quit the Cheaters (but he would come back at the end) and was replaced by a new drummer named James Gascoigne. Since the Cheaters would practice in the basement of the Bloch house, James would leave his drum kit there. Kurt had always thought it

would be super fun to learn how to play drums, and since he had a drum kit in his own house, he started banging on Gascoigne's drums. In his own words, "who wouldn't want to play drums?" But according to Lulu, she was the actual instigator behind forming the Fastbacks.

Kim, Kurt, Lulu and Shannon would frequently go to a club in Edmonds called the King Theater. One night, Lulu remembers seeing a band there that was so bad, that she told Kim, Kurt and Shannon that they were starting a band. Lulu knew they could play way better than the band she was hearing. Thus were spawned the Fastbacks.

The Fastbacks' original line-up was as follows:

Shannon Wood - Vocals

Kim Warnick - Bass

Lulu Gargiulo - Guitar

Kurt Bloch - Drums

At the time the Fastbacks formed (Fall of 1979), Kim was the most accomplished and proficient member on her instrument. Kurt had just started to play drums and Lulu was beginning the process of re-learning how to play guitar.

Shannon's

ability as a singer would never be witnessed beyond their rehearsal space, since she left the band prior to their first show.

Evidently, Shannon had such a problem with stage fright that it even pervaded their practices. She would either force everyone not to look at her while she sang, or she'd go out on the steps of the basement to sing. When it came time for a show, she bowed out because she was terrified at the thought of singing in front of people. Although Lulu did not know how to sing, she stepped up to the plate to replace Shannon. At the time, Kim was also scared at the notion of singing in front of people, but that would later change.

According to Kurt, the early Fastbacks were "way worse than the Cheaters." But while the tired old

cliché of 'musical differences' inevitably led to the demise of the Cheaters, the Fastbacks were just having fun trying to learn and play their instruments. Kim, Kurt, and Lulu vividly remember this early incarnation of the Fastbacks as a sickening and terrible band that was never in tune and thus barely listenable. Lulu thinks that some people may have liked them strictly because they were so bad. The Fastbacks played their first show (with Lulu on lead vocals and lead/rhythm guitar) on February 16, 1980 at the Laurelhurst Recreation Center together with the Vains and Psychopop (early PopDefect). Their set list consisted mostly of cover songs, with maybe an original or two thrown into the mix. Some of the covers they learned included such punk numbers as "Stay Free" by the Clash and "I Don't Mind" by the Buzzcocks, as well as more candy pop songs like Tommy



Roe's "Dizzy", and "Down At Lulu's" by the Ohio Express.

Attendance was pretty good, with most of their friends coming, as well as the friends of the other bands. Kurt remembers trying really hard to rock, but at the same time just being

absolutely horrible (tapes of this first show do exist!). The first Fastbacks original was a Kurt song entitled, "Real People," but it is unclear whether it was debuted at this first show. Kurt believes there is a demo of "Real People" somewhere, but that it is a "TERRIBLE" song.

Shortly around their first show, Kim decided that the Fastbacks should play the old Cheaters song, "Man As Hunter," and that she wanted to sing it. It would later turn out to be the first giant step in the gradual improvement of the band. Lulu admits to not being able to sing well at all. With Kim on vocals, the Fastbacks began writing more new material and learning new covers. Their first demo session was conducted in the front room of Lulu and Kim's house on February 28, 1980. Their roommate, Randy Fehr, had a reel-to-reel which they used to record a demo of 3 songs.

Around the same time the Cheaters disbanded and the Fastbacks got together, Al Bloch started another band with Dave Shumate and Randy Fehr called Wenis. It is interesting to note that The Fastbacks would later record covers of two Wenis songs ("The Right Thing" and "Wait It Out"). Kurt was also getting a lot of crap about the Fastbacks from people he knew. They were just wondering why he was wasting his time with such a shitty band while other people were starting 'serious' bands. Ironic that the Fastbacks would prove to have more staying

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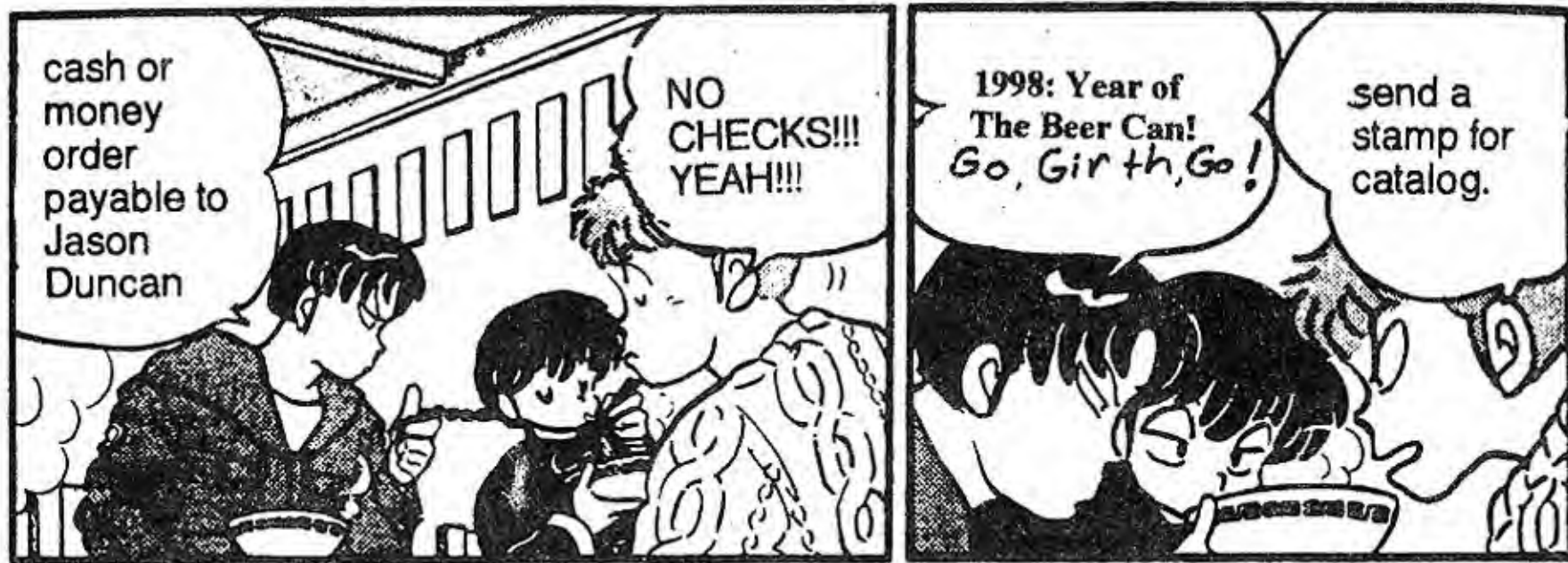
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***distro: 1,000 Flowers & 1,000 Leafs (Canada), Get Hip, Rotz, Rhetoric, Revolver, Choke, Underground-Medicine, Soda Jerk, Incognito (Germany) & Skull Duggery, **Hi, Mon-chi-chi!**



power and obtain far more recognition than any of their early peers. Kurt attributes this longevity to the fact that everyone was having fun in the early Fastbacks. They all loved music, they all loved playing music, and none of them really cared what other people thought. As for Lulu, she was more worried about trying to play the right chord than she was about people laughing at her.

The next Fastbacks demo recordings would take place in August of 1980. Kurt's childhood buddy, Len Skersies, had an 8-track recorder in his basement that he let them use for these sessions. In the liner notes to "The Question is No", Kurt writes, "It was hot out. We had no idea what we were doing. It's probably good we didn't. Things were funnier back then." Out of this session came 8 songs: "Don't Eat That, It's Poison", "Someone Else's Room", "Was Late", "Bus Stop", "Cowboy Song", "Another Thing Coming", "I Don't Mind", and "I Wanna Be With You". Of these demos, only "Don't Eat That, It's Poison" would find itself 'released' (on a K Records compilation called "Let's Sea" and then later on "The Question Is No"). "Someone Else's Room" and "Was Late" would later be re-recorded and released in other forms. "Bus Stop" and "Cowboy Song" are both unreleased Kurt originals. "Another Thing Coming" was actually written by Kim and Lulu, because back then they used to contribute original compositions. And the last two songs were Buzzcocks and Raspberries covers.

DUFF

Enter future Guns N' Roses bassist Duff McKagan. Although younger than any of the Fastbacks (15 years old), he was already playing in tons of local bands. Duff attended an alternative high school, one which allowed him to pretty much define his own curriculum. Since Kim was 18, she could sign his class credit slips for his 'music' class. One day he was over at Kim and Lulu's and the Fastbacks were about to practice. He asked if he could sit in on drums. They all agreed, since there

was an extra guitar there that Kurt could play (one has to wonder what Duff thought of the band at the time, or if he was trying to tell them something since Kurt was obviously a fairly skilled guitarist at that point). The practice ended up being a lot of fun, so they asked him to join the band. The Fastbacks were beginning to take shape.

Line-Up, circa 1980:

Kim Warnick - Bass and Vocals
Lulu Gargiulo - Guitar and Vocals
Kurt Bloch - Guitar
Duff McKagan - Drums

The first show with Duff on drums occurred on December 5, 1980 at the Gorilla Room. It didn't take long for this incarnation of the band to enter the studio. On January 20, 1981 they

numbered on the inside sleeve and the label of the single introduces what would become Kurt Bloch's modest publishing empire, Energy House Music. There was also a separate insert included with the single that included lyrics and credits, along with a few early photos.

This first Fastbacks single would serve as a blueprint for future Fastbacks songs. Each song has delicately constructed guitar passages, soaring harmonies, and jackhammer tempos. The Fastbacks would obviously get better at the performance and production side of things, but the songwriting in 1981 was already showing itself to be a unique mixture of pop, hard rock, and punk. It's interesting to listen to this single and contrast it with some of their more recent work. While Kurt's style has definitely matured as

Little did anyone realize at the time that Duff would only be the second in a long line of drummers to grace the Fastbacks lineup (or that he would end up playing bass on the butt rock classic "Sweet Child of Mine")

entered Triangle studios for their first real recording session (the engineers and producers were Jack Weaver, Homer Spencer, and Neil Hubbard). Four songs were recorded that day: "Someone Else's Room", "Was Late", "It's Your Birthday", and "You Can't Be Happy". "Someone Else's Room" would find itself on the Engram Records "Seattle Syndrome" compilation LP in 1981. "Was Late" would not see the light of day until 10 years later when the Blaster label in the U.K. re-released the early Fastbacks recordings for the "Never Fails, Never Works" LP. "It's Your Birthday" and "You Can't Be Happy" would be the two songs selected to represent the Fastbacks on their debut single.

One thousand copies of "It's Your Birthday b/w You Can't Be Happy" were pressed and released on the No Threes label in May of 1981. Of those thousand, Kurt may still have a few copies lying around. Each single was

both a songwriter and guitarist, and Kim's vocals have smoothed themselves out, the sound isn't very different at its core. Each song displays a maturity beyond its own sophistication, at times complicated and epic, but also bouncy and catchy.

Duff would end up playing ten Fastbacks shows in total, including at an opening slot for Joan Jett in March of 1981. Little did anyone realize at the time that Duff would only be the second in a long line of drummers to grace the Fastbacks lineup (or that he would end up playing bass on the butt rock classic "Sweet Child of Mine"). Kurt's internship as the drummer had lasted barely a year, but Duff's was to last even less time, as he found himself overcommitted to too many bands. He quit in July 1981, but would return later as their roadie on the Fastbacks first road trip tour in 1984. ⊕

Part Two and a complete Fastbacks discography coming in the next issue!

HIT SQUAD

THOSE WHO IGNORE HISTORY...

Though I write about music, I spend a lot of my time reading about, thinking about, or watching programs devoted to history. Since my cable system picked up The History Channel, I've watched it more than any other non-sports related fare (at least when the channel isn't showing it's 7000th program devoted to the



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Civil War and World War II). I like the channel most when it refers to accepted notions or myths about old events—and then says what *really* happened. It reminds me yet again that in our culture, the myth or the romantic depiction has largely replaced fact in the average person's historic awareness. As the Disneyfication of America increases, as past figures such as Pocahontas lose all their political and social context and become cartoon caricatures, I expect this to get worse. The blockbuster epic movie of the mineries of the Celine Dion CD of the t-shirt is just too pervasive now to be counteracted by barely-watched educational television and books.

I also often think of the places where music and history intersect (beyond music history, that is, though my love for that is also strong—as I write, I'm starting on Laurence Bergreen's extensive biography of the wonderful Louis Armstrong). I love historical band names such as the Gang of Four, New Model Army, Joy Division, and Catherine Wheel, or song titles such as Rasputina's "My Little Shirtwaist Fire," Peter Gabriel's "San Jacinto" or the Zombies' "Butchers Tale (Western Front 1914)." Even Gordon Lightfoot has made me curious as to the circumstances surrounding "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald." Simple things such as these have had the power to make me read whole books, or scan newspaper articles I used to skip. The hot-button inspiration, the zeal of sudden curiosity is a powerful thing.

Like the protagonist in the remarkable and hilarious novel *High Fidelity*, one thing my friends brood about is that their love of music is "escapist." Particularly those who spend an inordinate amount of time buying it, listening to it, even collecting and cataloging it. My reply is always the same. It depends on how you use it (and *what* you listen

to). Frankly, any obsession can be escapist. But the love of an artistic expression always has the potential to be healthy, enriching, and thought-provoking. And music has provoked me to continue my post-college self-education for the entire 13 years since my graduation.

An example, right from High School: When I was 16 I bought "Anarchy in the U.K." by the Sex Pistols and heard Johnny Rotten sing the lyric, "Is this the I.R.A.? I thought it was the U.K." I wondered what the I.R.A. was and asked around. After I found out, I became interested in the history of the Irish "troubles," far more than if someone had just sat me down in a class and begun lecturing. There is nothing like your own searches for your own discoveries. Sometime the next year, I also learned what Rotten's references to the M.P.L.A. and U.D.A. were. Soon I devoured a whole new LP devoted to the Ulster situation, Stiff Little Fingers' incredible debut *Inflammable Material*. Shifting to college, I attended speeches on the roots of the conflict by professors from Irish Universities. I bought more records from other Northern Irish bands and shops, such as Good Vibrations Records in Belfast, and got to know some people there who gave me their own first-hand accounts and perspective. Genuine interest is always the first step towards learning anything, and music *with relevant lyrics or ideas* can spark that in me like nothing else.

It still can. Some months ago, I received a single by a band, Olympic Hopeful. I was attracted by its title, "The First Bungle of Lewis and Clark." As it happened, I was at that very moment 150 pages into a thoroughly interesting book about these explorers by Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage; Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*. So naturally I couldn't wait to hear the record. To my disappointment, the song was an instrumental, with no lyrics. The title was mere artistic license. However, it gave me an excuse to mention the book in my review of the disc, in order to amuse Olympic Hopeful and anyone else who happened to read it, in the hopes of similarly throwing a spark into readers' brains to check the book out.

I wrote: "Since these songs are instrumental, you're left wondering just what Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's first bungle *was*. But since my summer reading included Ambrose's new bestseller on their expedition, I can tell you what I think it was: On October 4, 1804, in what is today northern South Dakota, "[t]he soldiers enjoyed the favors of the Arikara tribe women, often encouraged to do so by the husbands, who believed that they would catch some of the power of the white (and one black) men from such intercourse transmitted to them through their wives. Whether the Indians got any such white or black power cannot be said, but what they *had* gotten for sure from their [similar] hospitality to previous white traders was venereal disease, which was rampant in the village and was passed on to the men in the expedition." (Ouch.)

Proof, yet again, that truth is always stranger than fic-

tion, which is what makes me so mad every time a movie based on a real historical event changes the facts to accommodate a "better" story. Why? The *real* story must have been unusual, gripping, surprising, dramatic, and important enough on its own to become so stamped into our consciousness and warrant a movie.

But the movie writers always get away with it, because ultimately we don't really care. Music may lead me and others to become more curious about history, but the trend in this country is the opposite. We are becoming less historically literate, and thus less able to understand the forces that have gotten us to where we are, let alone make intelligent decisions based on that knowledge. Even without the nasty hand of the infotainment industrial complex (and egregious public relations spin control), we are becoming less motivated to learn about our own past. I've read some great books on the subject, none better than a shocking little read called *Lies My Teacher Told Me*. Its main point, other than to also correct blatant misinformation, half-truths, and distortions that we typically accept, is to place the blame on high school history textbooks (and in some case teachers) that plain suck. [Ed.—in my opinion, this particular book is more distorted and politically biased than most of the textbooks it criticizes]

As far as I can tell, the problem is that we grow bored of history, which is how we lose sight of its relevance. Everything taught to a 17-year-old student becomes dates, names, and places, cold data bereft of their multi-nuanced meaning to us now. Memorization of dry and uninteresting factoids and feel-good, rah-rah, wooden analysis is no way to inspire the passion for knowledge in anyone.

The way the central figures and disputes in our history are portrayed is downright cookie-cutter. Some people wear the white hats, the others the black. Thus, we form implausible assumptions. Like that our forefathers were motivated solely out of love of liberty and independence, and not as much out of personal political or economic gain, even though that totally fails to jibe with our understanding of politicians, power-holders, or elected representatives today. People and events are complex, and yet we always seem to want to oversimplify them for easier, more instant consumption and disposal, like a fast-food drive-up window version of current events and history.

I remember the first time I heard of the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, and the Alien and Sedition Acts soon

thereafter, the first major crises this country faced after ratifying the constitution and naming George Washington head honcho. I was in 11th grade U.S. history class, and I started asking problematic questions of the teacher. "Wasn't the Whiskey Rebellion marked by a valid and familiar complaint by Western farmers against their new government, that they were being taxed without representation? [The excise tax on whiskey was even specific to them.] And weren't the Alien and Sedition Acts an obvious gutting of the brand new bill of rights, especially the right to free speech?"

My teacher, a good one, said "When you're not in power and you rebel, you're a patriot. When you're in power and they rebel, they're traitors and subversives and must be repelled to preserve the State."

This was a bit of an eye-opener for me, and it makes perfect sense. It's no shock that George Washington and then John Adams, just like today's Republicans and Democrats, were capable of seeing the side of a difficult issue that met their own self-interest, even to the point of hypocrisy. (Imagine today's impeachment crisis with everything the same except for it being President Bush instead of Clinton, and a Democratic special prosecutor. Imagine the same rhetoric from the same representatives, only in total reverse, the Democrats howling about perjury and obstruction of justice, and the Republicans saying

"baloney." It's not hard, is it?) Or that their decisions were even more complicated than the issues I raised.

We do not make our original "patriot" founders more interesting by portraying them as some kind of infallible, noble gods—we make them *less* so. They are great figures just the same, even with plenty of gray to match the black and white. They just stop being boring when they become more recognizably human.

I think about this most of all during every Thanksgiving. I like the sentiment of being thankful for family and friends, but the whole Pilgrim part leaves me cold. The Hallmark cards, TV ads, newspaper editorials, comics, and most overheard conversations....It too is such a 4th grade view of what happened, the whole well-fed, tolerant Mayflower heroes and the grateful Indians. I went around this past November asking anyone if they knew what the Pequot War was. *No one* had heard of it. It's not a big star in High School History memories.

When I was 16 I bought "Anarchy in the U.K." by the Sex Pistols and heard Johnny Rotten sing the lyric, "Is this the I.R.A.? I thought it was the U.K." I wondered what the I.R.A. was and asked around.

HIT SQUAD

Any fair-minded look at the facts will show that the Puritanical Pilgrims, our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, were not *quite* the wonderful or tolerant or happy people we are told they are every Thanksgiving. They only survived starvation and pneumonia—losing 52 of the 102 that originally arrived in Massachusetts in 1620—with the help of local natives such as Squanto and Samoset, who spoke English. These native tribes had already been here for centuries and knew what to grow (so much for the “grateful Indians” part) and how to grow it. In fact, the local tribes peaceably traded with the settlers, which was likewise the only way the Pilgrims were able to survive economically (after all, they were the point-men and women for a speculative investment from back home, the Massachusetts Bay Company).

Yet only 17 years later, in 1637, after waves of other Pilgrims arrived to reinforce them, the settlers began the first of two major wars of expansion against the Pequot nation, the inhabitants of most of the nearby land. The warfare was completely guerrilla in nature, as the Pilgrims sacked and burned Indian Villages, at one point *slaughtering 600 civilians* in a village near the Mystic River. (Said William Bradford, “It was a fearful sight to see them thus frying in the fyer, and the streams of blood quenching the same, and horrible was the stincke and sente there of.”) The Pilgrims also kept the Pequot women and girls they captured as slaves.

Some kind of moral heritage this is! Perhaps the saddest thing about Thanksgiving is how much influence the “blatant intolerance and stiff necked sanctimoniousness of the Puritan Spirit,” to quote popular historian Kenneth C. Davis, still has on our national mores. It is certainly a factor in the morality play of Clinton’s troubles, as all his political rivals keep calling for *another* prostrated show of “penance,” as if that would satisfy them and lead them to drop their calls for impeachment as fast as he dropped his pants.

I thought a lot about this stuff while reading the Lewis and Clark book. Aside from the passage I quoted above, the funniest parts of the chronicle are when the otherwise brilliant, valiant, remarkable, and ingeniously improvising Captains met up with different Great Plains Indian tribes throughout 1804 and 1805, some of whom were encountering white men for the first time ever. The dynamic duo would launch into a long speech about how the Indians now had a “new father” named Jefferson, chief of the 17

great nations of the East (the number of States back then), in a far away place called Washington. This new father, who the Indians had never heard of before, now “controlled” the land the natives had been living on for *centuries*. What a great benefit that will be to them! They had better make peace with all the other tribes they were at war with, quickly, and trade only with the countrymen of the new father from now on.

And just in case the natives didn’t buy the benevolence of this wonderful news (what a surprise, they didn’t even understand how this made them better off!), or entertained notions of continuing to trade with the Spanish, French, or English instead of the new kids on the block, then Lewis and Clark punctuated their good cop/bad cop lecture with what Ambrose calls “a magic show.” They fired off their cannon and an air gun—both technological marvels—as a show of force for the astonished locals.

Overall, the speech was a tragicomic, confusing, repeated display (Lewis didn’t pay heed to the bad reaction he kept getting), one that just made the Indians more wary. (Imagine a new boy with a hot slingshot coming up to the

local bullies and saying he was going to tell them what to do from now on, or else his big daddy they’d never heard of would come someday and punish them.) The speech was an example of extreme hubris, one largely at odds with what was actually taking place.

In *actual* fact, at different points in

the expedition, Lewis and Clark and their 30 men, one black slave, one Indian woman, and one dog were on the verge of starvation, while the Indians were eating fine. In particular, like the Pilgrims before them, the party was able to survive the Fargo-like conditions of the 1804-1805 winter, in what is today Washburn, North Dakota, only by buying the Mandan Indians’ corn in exchange for battle axes the American blacksmith made on the spot (thus confusing the Indians more, by preaching peace and then selling them weapons!). The Americans were also attacked by the fearsome Sioux, who just laughed at their silly little speech. The party barely escaped up the river with their lives and crucial stores of supplies.

And yet Lewis and Clark were already threatening the natives, their new neighbors, with their so-called benevolent business interests as so-called equal partners (which, as we know from history, and the Indians could already tell, was a poor bet) and the consequences of dealing with the business competition instead—Microsoft has been accused of less of late. Ever wonder why the Eastern Indians were always siding with the French (in the French and Indian War) and then the British (in the Revolution and later Indian-Territory conflicts) in the Eastern North

Perhaps it’s my own first bungle to think that music will ever be anything but trivial background entertainment and escapist fare to most people.

American wars, exacting a fearsome toll on American lives?

Meanwhile, the modern image of the Plains Indians as simple-minded, peace-loving, agrarian ecologists is just as much a silly crock, as this book makes plain. Everywhere Lewis and Clark went, the Indians grew angry at the pair's chincy presents (like Jefferson medals!!!), demanding instead crucial guns and gunpowder—either to make war on their neighboring tribes, or to protect themselves from those tribes, who were endlessly raiding them and stealing their food, horses, and (ulp) women.

In short, they were humans. To dispel the *opposite* myth about them, it is just as ridiculous to think they were inferior to the whites, any more than any other advanced culture is today. The Indians were just different. Their resourcefulness in the wild was superior to that of the Europeans, and their socialistic values made for less internal problems (less, not none) and power struggles. But we trivialize and marginalize Native Americans by presenting them as some kind of 18th/19th Century Sierra Club living in total tranquility and harmony with themselves and nature. What technology they had, they used, against the vegetation and animals for subsistence, even against each other. What they got from the Europeans, they immediately put to use, for good and for bad, and vice versa.

In the end, Lewis and Clark's real bungle was to expect human beings that had lived without them for hundreds of years to bow down before them just because they showed up in town with a new big stick, while at the same time desperately *needing* the Indians for food, geographical

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information, and horses. Or their first bungle was to believe with the apparent earnestness that they did, along with Jefferson, that Western natives would soon be incorporated into the United States as peaceable trade partners and citizens of equal rights, Europeanized like immigrants even though they'd been here all along. The Americans' own brief history had shown them Indian resistance to European and American expansion everywhere on the Eastern half of the country, and further, had shown them the expanding Europeans' resistance to the Indians' assimilation even if they were peaceful. One wonders how these men of extraordinary intelligence—Jefferson included—could so readily discount the examples already around them. But that's what happens when you don't learn from, or willfully ignore, your own history!

And perhaps it's my own first bungle to think that music will ever be anything but trivial background entertainment and escapist fare to most people. Or to think that we will ever have another music culture like the early punk rock movement, whose members thought it happy sport to dig up stuff like the above and debate it with intelligence and a love of inquiry instead of mindless worshipping idols. Or to think that inconvenient facts and contrary historical records will ever dissuade our nation from embracing the bogus Hollywood endings and dueling-extremes-simplifications instead of all that we are and all that we've been. ⊕

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HIT SQUAD

Welcome to my first column. I appreciate the opportunity presented to me by *Hit List* to....well, basically make a jackass out of myself publicly, and on a regular basis, no less. For those of you who do not know me, here's a few facts and then we can meander off into some useless and unresearched opining. I'm 36, was born and raised in Europe, have been living in the U.S. for twenty years, and have been hanging around various 'alternative' art or music scenes since 1980. Over the years I've enjoyed some success as an 'artist', though designer or cut-'n'-paste hack might be the more appropriate term. About four years ago I moved to San Francisco and started a small music label, Man's Ruin. I have had the opportunity to travel and function in our little alterna-world quite a bit, and despite my own doubts the editors felt that I might have a few valid opinions on matters related to, for lack of a better term, 'punk' and 'the underground'



in general—matters which promise to remain eternally 'pertinent' within our 'scene', thanks largely to the massive internal schism caused by the last few years' worth of endlessly circular pontificating in the pages of MRR. Oh joy! Personally, I could give a flying rat's ass about what is 'punk' or not...for me it originally was, and forever will be, a combination of great music and self-expressive FUN. [Ed.—Amen, brother!] Turning it into some bizarre and pointless internecine Marxist dialogue is a sad waste of time, especially when you consider that your average local TV weatherman probably has more political clout and social import than any 100 punk bands put together. The world is an immense and complex place, and frankly no one outside the scene will ever really care. After all, there are Beanie Babies to collect.

Which leads me, naturally enough, to Garth Brooks. Years ago I thought that I had indeed experienced the Devil in the flesh...her name was Heather, and I was quite proud of having survived the experience more or less intact. But of course I was mistaken, for after all He is The Prince Of Lies, and I was foolish to think that I could have identified and disposed of Him with such ease. For just the other night I saw Him again, glowing arms outstretched, His toadlike form writhing and His grinning face twisting, plastered across my television screen. I, of course, succumbed to an instant catatonic seizure. The remote

fell from my hand, and I proceeded to spend the following hour in an ever increasing state of fear and anxiety. One thought kept looping through my mind. Why? Talentless and physically repulsive, his eyes betraying a complete psychosis, he managed to keep a crowd of tens of thousands enraptured. Perhaps it was merely a momentary physical manifestation for the 50 million or so people that have purchased his recordings, recordings that are, at their base, not even there. How did he attain so much power, and obtain so much public validation? Was it simply the end result of a gigantic marketing machine, churning away on some hidden level in an unceasing effort to exploit the world for its own hidden purposes? Are 'normal' people really that fucked up, or is it me? Have I managed to spend an entire lifetime in a constant delusional state of false self-aggrandizement...when

I'm really nothing more than a pathetic loser, a tick dangling off the edge of the real world? Man's Ruin regularly releases records that are 'better', more 'intelligent', and more 'meaningful'—by any rational standard—than Garth's, and yet only a few thousand people ever buy or hear them. Meanwhile this fake cowboy, the Devil incarnate, opens his arms and croaks out the most banal of words set to synthetic elevator music, and the world crowns him as Emperor. Meanwhile, we 'punks' continue to destroy ourselves by arguing about meaningless labels and abusively categorizing each others' personal stances in an ever-contracting 'scene' that is of absolutely no importance to the world at large. Depressing, eh?

Now, the simpleminded reply to all this will no doubt be, "Hey

man, it's all because of the conspiracy by (fill in the blank) to dominate and control the market, brainwash everyone, etc." Well, wake up and smell the cappuccino through that nose ring, lil' punker, cause it just ain't so. Over the years I've had a pretty good look 'backstage' at just about every one of the corporate entities that are mindlessly blamed for all the world's problems, including record labels, publishing firms, advertising agencies, and film studios. It may well be true they are all controlled by a relative handful of people, about 400 or so, who 'decide' what the rest of us are going to consume in the realm of social fantasy, but I have yet to notice any organized conspiracy to actually determine our tastes. The sad truth is that they are in the business of giving "the people" exactly what they want. Their primary motivation is to make money, and the best way to do that is to appease us by satisfying our lowbrow tastes. It's not THEM...it's US.

I'll be depending on your hate mail for future columns, so please email me at: mansruin@sirius.com.... ☺

Kozik's Current Top 10:

1. Michael Savage on KSFO 560 AM 4-7 pm weekdays, probably the world's most amusing and misinformed "Nazi", transmitting to the San Francisco and environs or on the web
2. Crippled Dick Hot Wax, an amazing German label dedicated to unearthing and re-releasing brilliant and obscure film soundtracks from the 70s. Their 'new' bands suck, though
3. Chilean "Senator for Life" Augusto Pinochet will have to bite The Big One. Finally, my countrymen in Spain do something right!
4. The Impeachment Hearings Toupee Show....gotta love them wigs.
5. Scandinavian Rock, including the Hellcopters, Gluecifer, the Backyard Babies, Turbonegro, all much better than your band
6. Internet Tulip Mania, which is going to make YzK extra fun. Stock up on your ammo, baby!
7. Babe, Pig in the City, which has more emotion and art than a hangar full of Shakespeare. Or, for that matter, a van full of Rollins. [Ed.—that's easy to believe]
8. Boom from The Idiots, the Peanut Butter Jonesmanchild in the city, who, incidentally, gets more ass than a park bench. [Ed.—that's hard to believe]
9. the current spate of WWII movies and books, which make the last fifteen years of being a secret armchair General seem a little less silly. Or, maybe not.
10. Sony Playstation, instead of cable.

HIT SQUAD

I suppose that somewhere along the line, somebody went to the end of a long list of "rules of punk" and added one more. There are several things about this that perturb me. To me, punk has nothing to do with music. Punk is an attitude. I believe it was possibly portrayed best in the Subhumans' (the good ones from Canada, that is) song "We Don't Care What You Say, Fuck You". Punk has always meant questioning authority. Punk has always meant being an individual. Punk has always meant doing what you wanted to do. Most importantly, punk has always meant having a total disregard for conformity and rules. Yet rules are being created by punks for punks in this scene every day.



We have a local club here in Berkeley called the Gilman Street Project. This is not meant to be a jab at this particular establishment, but to serve as an example of an undoubtedly wider trend. I respect Gilman Street for putting on shows, continuously fighting the odds, and keeping their doors open. But the funny thing about those open doors is that as soon as you walk through them, the first thing you see is an eight foot wall covered with rules and regulations. I can understand the first few rules

about no drinking and no fighting, since these are things you have to control in order to keep an establishment running, but as you read on the "rules" move into the sphere of political statements that you have to agree with, the types of music and bands that are and are not "acceptable", and the sorts of personal choices that you should make, both while at Gilman and in your everyday life. Once you get past this wall, your eyes fall upon a sight that can scarcely be believed or understood. All the sheep...I mean punks...are there, all wearing the same black hooded sweatshirts, all with the exact same patches on their clothes, and all standing around doing the exact same thing.....nothing. They just stand there blankly staring at the bands. I can't tell if this is because they are still bitter about their precious "punk" heroes breaking into the mainstream HALF A FUCKING DECADE ago, or if they don't really understand the music but have somehow

ended up in this scene for lack of a better place to go. This baffles me. Ridiculous rules are being enforced and followed, and people are losing their individual identities, all in the name of punk rock.

Rules are constantly emerging about how you should put out records, what records you should buy, what is and is not punk, what constitutes selling out, who is "good" and who is "evil". Once again, this is all being done in the name of punk. And perhaps worst of all, political correctness. It has sort of a punk rock ring to it, doesn't it? More and more shit is being crammed down our throats about what to buy, what to listen to, and what lifestyle choices we should make if we want to be a good lil' punks. AND, SAD TO SAY, TOO MANY PUNKS ARE MINDLESSLY DOING JUST WHAT THEY ARE TOLD TO DO! What the fuck does being politically correct have to do either PUNK or ROCK? If you see some old lady fall out of her wheelchair, are you supposed to run over and help her back into it, or are you supposed to bust your gut laughing at her? Neither. You're supposed to do what the fuck you want, as long as that doesn't involve actually knocking her out of her wheelchair. If you think her predicament is funny, then feel free to laugh. If you feel sorry for her, then go pick her ass up. If you can't decide, then try a combination of the two. Likewise, if a new record comes out which uses the word "fag" 36 times, or has some other political statement on it that you don't agree with, what are you supposed to do? Are you supposed to buy and enjoy the music on it without worrying about the contents, enjoy the music but take care to keep your hand on the volume knob so that you can mute the "offensive" portions, or simply refuse to buy an amazing new album if it hadn't been for all those gosh darned rules that you had to follow? Unfortunately I know what most of you

If we tweak a few people along the way, then good. Fuck em'. They probably needed to be tweaked.

would probably choose to do, and you're a bunch of damn pussies for doing it! ESPECIALLY IN THE NAME OF PUNK ROCK!

How the hell all this p.c. bullshit ever got mixed up in rock and roll, I'll never understand. Rock and roll has always been about the portrayal of sex and drugs, and everything else in this world that's frowned upon by squares, in such a way that you would think that just mentioning the words "rock and roll" would scare away any potential rulemakers. The two just don't go together.

And yet there is a well-known punk publication (whose name I prefer not to mention, but only cuz I'm such a sensitive lil' p.c. fucker) that claims to take rock and roll to its "maximum" levels, yet devotes a high proportion of its pages to setting up rules and regulations for punks and then criticizing all the "immoral" people, bands, and labels that supposedly violate those very same rules and regulations. The remainder of the pages, at least those not filled with revenue-generating ads (which the editors would probably use as grounds for defaming anyone else as a "greedy capitalist asshole who was trying to rip off the scene"), are often used to

promote bands which behave in accordance with, or at least pay lip service to, the "correct" values promoted by the zine. I suspect that some of these obscure bands have been manufactured out of whole cloth so as to permit their "interviewers" to ask and then answer their own questions, thereby reassuring all the sheep...I mean punks...out there that all the "real" punks follow the zine's rules. Many developments, events, and bands in the punk and rock and roll worlds seem to be avoided merely because they don't conform to the aforementioned rules and regulations. What's ironic is that I frequently see various constipated representatives from this same publication at shows kissing the asses of bands that sing quite un-p.c. lyrics or that blatantly use female body parts to sell records. Personally I don't have a problem with either of these things, but acting this way seems somewhat hypocritical for people associated with that zine. To get back to my earlier statement about "punk" not being a musical style but an attitude, I believe that the music that generally gets classified as punk is just aggressive rock and roll, played and presented with the attitude that I described earlier. Viewed in this light, that particular publication obviously has nothing to do with "punk" or rock and roll, since the attitude they display is hardly "punk" and the music they cover, to the extent that it conforms to their own ridiculous RULES, can't be rock and roll.

On a brighter note, I am quite excited about Hit List. We are coming out of the gate with a very punk attitude—that is, with no rules attached—and plan on covering some of the most rockin' bands, labels, and people that are either part of the current scene (or the "anti-scene", for that matter) or have been a big part of its past. This has been our goal since day

BRETT MATHEWS

one, and the response we've received so far sort of reassures my dwindling faith in the scene. The first reaction from almost everybody that we've talked to has been, "this is exactly what is needed, let us know what we can do". What more could we ask for?

As far as band articles go, I hope that we bring some new insight into the coverage of your old favorites, and maybe turn you on to some well kept rock and roll secrets along the way. There will also be spotlights on particular record labels, since we want to make you aware of various labels out there that are releasing some of the best new music, such as Junk, TKO, GMM, Rip Off, and Headache, to name only a few. Some of the feature articles might not be about something that you're already interested in or informed about, but we feel that they will all be pretty interesting and relevant to the world of music and popular culture. Just because something isn't directly affecting you or happening to you today, doesn't mean it won't be tomorrow. And as far as our columnists go, what a bunch of assholes—especially that grumpy old Jeff Bale fucker! But I'm nonetheless grateful to get to meet and work with each and every one of them—even that grumpy old Jeff Bale fucker!

Please check out our magazine with an open mind. If we tweak a few people along the way, then good. Fuck em'. They probably needed to be tweaked. Just remember—one person may not be able to change the world, but they can sure piss a whole lot of people off by tryin'. ⊕



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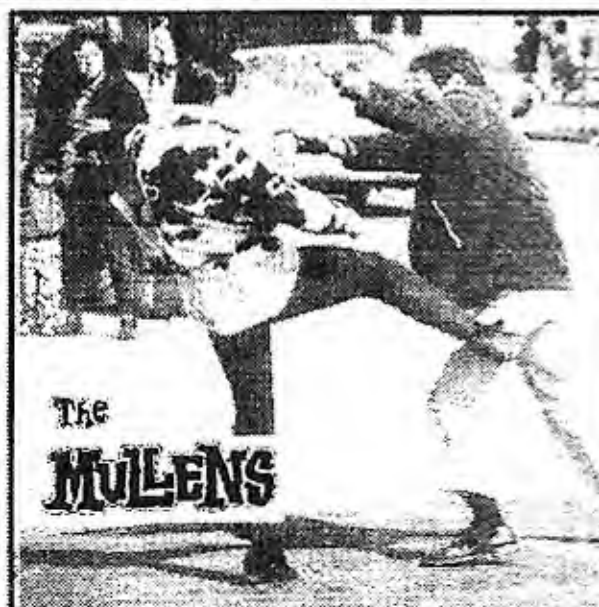
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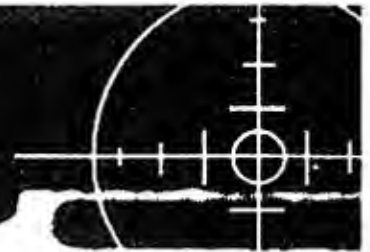
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Racist Rap Hurts My Feelings

A couple years ago, I was driven from the office job I had held for almost 7 years. I had endured working alongside a horde of bitchy old prune faced hags for long enough. Likewise, I could no longer stomach that dopey pack of change jingling old eunuchs...the office "men". I had fought the entire office for many years...they were all weirded out by my beard and long hair...and the black clothing I wore for the express purpose of annoying them. They thought I was a satanist, so I played along because it intimidated them.

I've learned over the years working at other job-sites that it's easier to let my co-workers think I am a satanist, biker, or other "familiar" type of weirdo than to tell them the truth...that I play in a band. If I played in a normal band it wouldn't be so hard to explain...they might even admire me. But, no...I'm a founding member of RANCID VAT...a band that has

with the "human resources" office...then faxed a copy to every female senior manager in the company and promptly quit, realizing that I had no job to go back to.

I hate job hunting even more than I hate dealing with co-workers...so I took the very first job that came along. Some friends helped me get a lowly clerk's position at a nearby corporate record store on a very trendy street.

I talked myself into accepting the job by rationalizing that I would enjoy being "around music"...and indeed I probably would have if I had gone to work at a store that sold rock and roll, or country, jazz, or even classical. But unfortunately, nobody warned me that the store I was going to work at sells a huge percentage of music made by and for people that, without ever having met me, HATE MY GUTS EVEN MORE THAN THE OFFICE-WORKER SQUARES DID! Yeah, the office rubes thought I was a satanist, or maybe a biker, but the rap imbeciles that patronize the corporate record store are far more judgmental. They take one look at me and what they consider my corny "cracker" get up and figure that I'm a racist asshole like they've been trained to hate by a steady stream of anti-white, hateful rap CDs.

The truth is, the only section of the corporate record store that stocks blatantly racist material is...yeah...the rap section. It brings in a lot of dough, too. Here I might point out the obvious double standard: allegedly racist rock bands are not stocked!! After all, "we don't want to offend our customers"!! Of course if the corporate record store banned ALL blatantly racist CDs the rap floor shelves would be emptied considerably...and it would seriously cut into the store's sales figures. Rap is extremely profitable. White power Oi and "tasteless" punk rock are not.

Very often, the producer of a rap CD will weave a cute little storyline between songs on an hour length album to break up the monotony...a happy skit in which the rapper leads his "homey's" in an attack on some evil white devils. I've researched this hateful trend to the extent that I have spent a sum total of several hours watching rap videos on B.E.T. Wouldn't you know it, the videos promoting these hateful, racist CDs actually show white actors getting the shit knocked out of them. I remember one video in which the white-devil's apparent sin was that of walking down the street in a black community carrying the white-devil's favorite tool of oppression...A BRIEFCASE.

The record companies behind these CDs and videos aren't tiny little indies...no, indy rap and hip hop is considered second rate in the same way that obscure punk bands are looked upon as mediocre by the mainstream rock mindset. The fact is that HUGE LABELS manufacture and distribute the plethora of rap CDs that glorify race-war, pimp-slapping women around and, in general, a daily lifestyle devoted to strutting around shooting or beating up anybody you get a hair up your ass to attack.

You know what? Up to now you may get the idea that

Thinkin' & Drinkin' w/ The Whiskey Rebel



been booted out of as many clubs as any other band over the last eighteen years. You would think that as a member of a band so hated that I would be some sort of extrovert on the job...going out of my way to offend people. Really, I'd rather just get through my work day and go home and drink.

Anyway, like I say, it's easier to play along with an untruth than spend time trying to explain myself. I didn't want ANYTHING to do with those old fucks. After working with those fossils all those years, I would still rather have walked home through three miles of sub-zero temperature than borrow a dollar for cabfare from any of 'em. I tried to talk as little as possible...and some days managed to succeed in avoiding dialogue with my co-workers entirely.

Not often enough to make me want to keep that job any longer, though.

After witnessing a dozen co-workers (SPURRED ON BY MY SUPERVISOR, FOR CHRIS'SAKES) publicly gossip about a couple of office gals (who weren't present to defend themselves) that they considered sluts, I figured that was an opportune time to bail out. I filed a complaint

I object to huge corporations making big bucks conditioning naive rap listeners that its "OK" to live and act in a barbaric, violent manner. Well, you're wrong...IM ONLY PISSED THAT AS A WHITE "DEVIL" WHO PLAYS IN AN OBSCURE LITTLE BAND I HAVE NO EQUAL RIGHT TO GET IN ON THE FUN...!!! Don't get me wrong...I have NO DESIRE to emulate rap's blatant racist slant.....I only want my bandmates and I to be granted the same freedom of expression granted to rappers.

It's really common for rap CDs to feature little "comic" blurbs that stereotype racial groups. Koreans, Italians, and of course homosexuals are constantly poked fun of. My band has had the plug pulled out live several times for between-song banter that is pretty tame in comparison with what you hear on the some of the biggest selling rap CDs.

As far as I'm concerned, rap died with EASY E. It has degenerated into the most predictable genre carried on our corporate racks. Current rap releases feature one of two covers:

COVER A): Rapper is depicted on cover with a surly frown, and is displaying a lot of flashy, shiny (and probably phony) jewelry. A few slutty "ho's" are often draped over the rapper.

Sometimes the cover will show the rapper with a group of lackeys...if so, they always sport equally menacing scowls. Smiling on a rap album cover apparently went out of vogue with the FAT BOYS.

COVER B): Same as above, but utilizing the safe, timeworn but marketable "Mafioso" motif.

That's it!! If you think I'm exaggerating, go to your neighborhood corporate record store and check it out. Even the most boring and lame rock acts are packaged far more creatively.

Other genres of music are routinely criticized for ignoring the "founding fathers" of the particular genre in question...country being a prime example. Yet to this day, at least Jimmy Rodgers and Hank Williams are represented in the country section at any corporate record store. The fickle finger of rap, however, relegates ITS founding fathers to other sections of the store!!! The dudes who started it all, the LAST POETS and the WATTS PROPHETS, are often filed under "spoken word", and Rudy Ray Moore and Blowfly have been buried in the comedy aisle. Since nobody...and I mean NOBODY...is interested in rap from a few years ago, with the exception of a couple of SUGARHILL and DEF JAM collections, you will find old rap "filed" away at your local thrift store.

When I first went to work at the corporate record store, I was given a tour and shown the three different sales

floors: the ROCK floor (which is the main floor), the Jazz floor (upstairs), and the RAP floor (which is in the basement). I inwardly dreaded the thought of working on the RAP floor. I needn't have worried...the supervisors who prepared the schedule every day made a pointed effort to keep me from working in the basement for even five minutes. At first I didn't really understand, but then it took me a while to realize that there is a conspiracy of silence concerning most matters involving "race" within the store. Suffice it to say that the supervisors ALL KNEW just by looking at me that there would likely be trouble if I were manning the register on the rap floor.

My first couple weeks on the job, I heard numerous comical accusations of racism from our customers. I must have directed one hundred people a day to the rap section "in the basement". An alarming number took exception to the location of rap, as if by locating the genre in the basement it was part of a white devil plan to symbolically "keep 'em down". Then there were the two black junkies who ripped off a couple thousand postcards. When

stopped by a huge black "loss prevention" agent and myself, one paranoid fellow crooked a finger at me and declared that I was "pulling that ol' cracka shit"!!! And how about all the customers who wanted to

They take one look at me and what they consider my corny "cracker" get up and figure that I'm a racist asshole like they've been trained to hate by a steady stream of anti-white, hateful rap CDs.

exchange scratched up stacks of weatherbeaten CDs they probably bought at a flea market...without a receipt. Scamming customers of all races are always turned away. I've heard more than one black customer try to play the race card by accusing the store of being "racist" by not accepting scratchy CDs without a return receipt.

I was quickly promoted to supervisor myself...and found myself being personally accused of racism on a regular basis. One dude argued with me for several minutes because I wouldn't give him a refund on a couple of beat up cassettes without receipts.

At one point in the conversation, he said "can't you tell by looking at me that I'm no thief"?? AhHa!!!, I thought. He's ASKING me to discriminate in his favor based on his neat appearance. I told him that NO, we don't judge customers by their appearance.

Two minutes later, the fellow that was upset with me for REFUSING TO make a decision based on "appearance" was accusing me of discriminating against him!!! I hear enough of this crap working up on the ROCK floor... if I were stationed behind the register in the basement I would be hearing this kind of crap every hour.

HIT SQUAD

Why? Because of my appearance. Honestly, I go out of my way to leave all my shirts with rebel flag artwork at home. Black jazz and R&B customers seem to like me, but nothing I do will change the fact that I'm an overweight, longhaired, bearded "cracker", and therefore a racist, in the eyes of many of the store's rap customers. The average rap customer is young and has been conditioned by the simplistic "us versus them" rap lyrics to judge people based on their appearance.

I've read a lot of editorials condemning cops for assuming that every young black male they see is a criminal. That sort of open-mindedness is almost universally forgotten when the tables are turned. So, ALL cops end up being considered racist bullies, and likewise the fact that many rap customers hate ME based on my appearance is treated as business as usual. I haven't seen many editorials lately urging tolerance for people who look like me.

Of course, if the tables were turned, if one of our many black employees were "disrespected" by a white customer in a racial manner, they'd be shown the door by our security staff. In fact, I have personally defended a couple of black clerks from rude attacks by white customers using the word "boy" and shit like that. But, if you are white, you don't have the right to even suggest that a black customer is behaving in a racist fashion. Black-on-white racism is just considered a silly notion, or merely an excuse used by white racists to draw attention away from their own hatred. The prevailing social opinion is that only whites are capable of being racist.

So, white male clerks in the basement at work have been knocked down, insulted ("hey, faggot" is a popular line), threatened, and humiliated without any action or measure taken by management or security to prevent future instances of trouble. Most female clerks, black OR white, are FUCKING TERRIFIED at the thought of being stationed in the basement. The store management staff makes a big deal about circulating memos that rail against on-the-job sexual harassment to its employees of all kinds...EXCEPT when it comes from the customers.

We used to have a punk rocker with an elaborate mohawk working at our store. When he was on duty he'd often have to work the register in the basement and take shit from all the rap kids who thought he looked silly. Well, maybe he did look kinda silly, but surely no more silly than the parade of rap and hip hop fans hanging out on the street with sticks jutting out of their mouths, wearing workboots that they'd never consider working in, making a "statement" by wearing expensive yachting

apparel preferred by crotchety old rich white dudes.

My return "statement" to kids into rap is this: quit spending so much money on trendy clothing. Learn to question what you hear on CDs. A lot of it is plain old horseshit being troweled out thoughtlessly, such as the incongruity of an artist praising and thanking god in the liner notes of a CD, and then turning around and advocating violence. There are plenty of whites and blacks that get along great...study THEIR example if you really want to be educated.

I can't help but feel like I'm gonna be job hunting again really soon.

Even though I'm supposedly working in a tolerant environment dedicated to "music", I can't think of a single warehouse or office I've ever worked in where racial hatred was so ignored. Hell, I've worked temp jobs at fucking banks—long thought to be amongst the most evil of institutions—and been a bill collector in the black part

My return "statement" to kids into rap is this: quit spending so much money on trendy clothing. Learn to question what you hear on CDs.

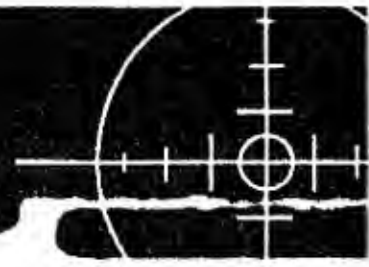
of the blame at the feet of the rap music industry. I've never, ever heard a racial insult or joke on the part of any employee at the corporate record store. It's a fucking shame that the rap music industry feels the need to brainwash so many kids into behaving

exactly like the racist assholes they are supposedly preaching against.

By the way...in my opinion the best guys to work with at the corporate record store are the security guards, 95% of whom are black. They've got my back, and I've got theirs. A lot of the guys seem just as disgusted with the "gangsta" mentality as I am. Some of 'em are Muslims, some are Baptists. Some are just heathen party animals like me. But we've all grown up past the stage where we feel like we have to live out gangsta' rap or white power lyrics. They know I can't stand rap or hip hop.....and they just laugh it off...why the fuck should they care???? I don't fucking care that they aren't into RANCID VAT...why the fuck should I????

The next time I hear anybody sniveling about an obscure punk rock band whose records are banned from chain stores for allegedly being "racist" or "sexist" or "tasteless", thee WHISKEY REBEL is gonna grab 'em by the pencil neck and drag 'em down to the rap floor at work and show them what a roomful of hateful mainstream major label releases looks like. Like my dear old Mother used to say when I whined too much..."quit crying, or I'll give you something to really cry about!!" ⊕

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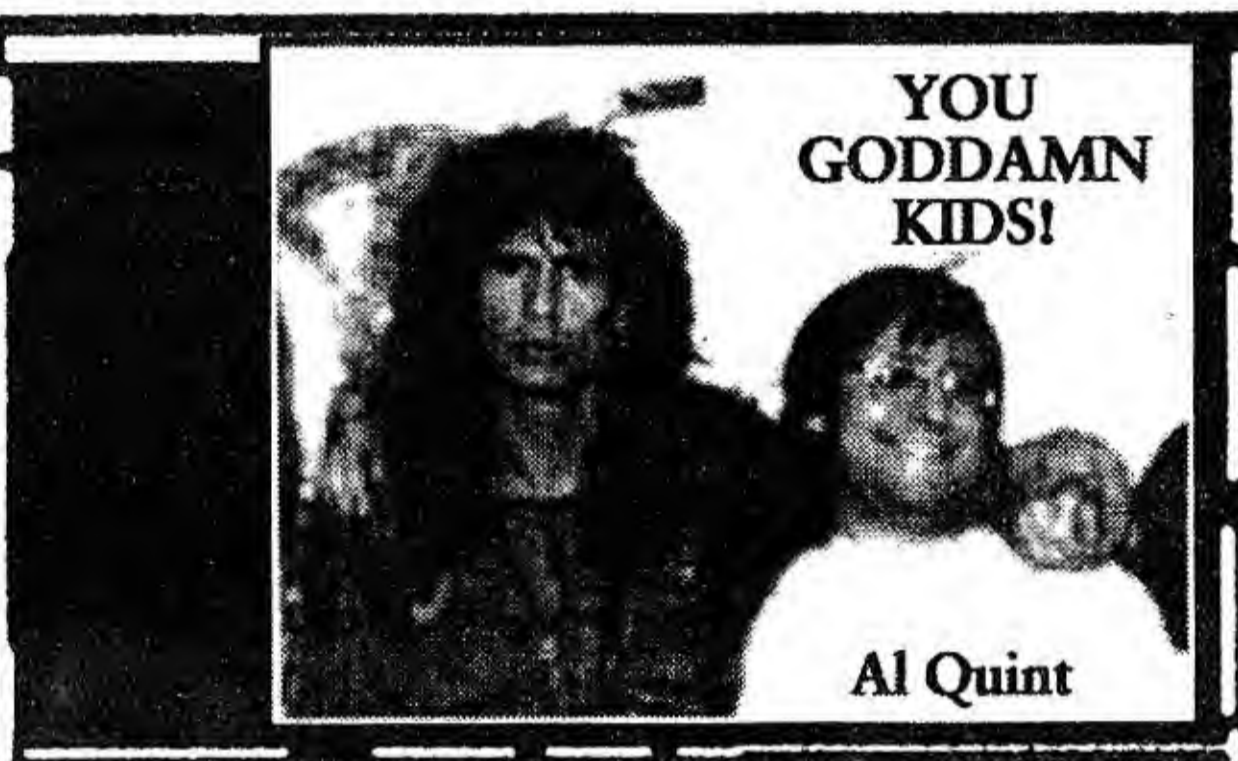


Ah, the punk and hardcore youth of today. And I'm not making some Ray Cappo reference here, either. Some of 'em have no sense of musical history or, if they do, it dates back to the 80s and the cheeseball new wave and hair metal bands of the period. It makes me cringe to see an otherwise cool local punk band, the Unseen, covering Poison's "Every Rose Has Its Thorn" and lauding GNR's "Appetite of Destruction" as one of the greatest albums ever in an interview I did with them recently. Now, "Appetite" certainly had some decent songs, but one of the best ever? Plus, Messrs. Axl and company weren't exactly shy about stealing where they had to... always thought, for instance, that the acoustic bridge on "It's So Easy" was lifted rather blatantly from

honest, my poorly-developed social skills meant a paucity of friends. Emo didn't exist then, so if you were a geek, you were likely to be unpopular. When I became aware of punk's existence in '77, I embraced it whole-hog, one of the first 3 or 4 people in my suburban Boston community to do so (and I have to thank Paul "Greeny" Greenberg for providing me with punk rock baptism via "God Save The Queen"). That still didn't make me cool and I still felt alienated from most of the people in my high school but at least that sense of alienation would eventually become somewhat more socially acceptable or hip. Not that it really mattered to me.

Before punk, though, there was a musical search. Around '72 and '73, there was a shift in my taste from the top 40 of my pre-adolescence to the discovery of the wonders of sonic destruction, the liberating properties of guitars played at full volume. A neighbor bestowed on me "Led Zeppelin II" and Grand Funk's second album (the one with the red cover). I had recently picked up "Who's Next," as well. These were epiphanies in the development of my love for the rock. Somehow, though, Black Sabbath escaped my radar until the college years, around '78. I was aware of their existence but never checked them out. Then, Bob "The Wizard," the dorm-mate who played "Children Of The Grave" so often that our residence assistant threatened to break the album over his head if he continued to do so, enlightened me to the wonders of Ozzy and company. Actually, that came after I had heard the Dickies' version of "Paranoid" and had my curiosity piqued.

But I digress... Aerosmith were the shit and hit me hard. The first exposure came via the ballad "Dream On," but then I discovered that the rest of their debut album was a stripped-down, hard rockin' intoxicant. Sure, they got critiqued as Stones/Yardbirds worshippers, which they were, but my critical detectors weren't quite so astute at the age of 13. It rocked and that's all that mattered. There was a feeling of excitement when "Get Your Wings" came out the following year. Coming home on a rainy day, tearing off the shrink-wrap and being bombarded by the ferocious likes of the bad-ass "Same 'O1 Song and Dance," "SOS" and their piledriving take on "Train Kept A Rollin'." Even a cool mellow number in the aforementioned "Seasons Of Wither." The Aeros ruled the Boston area at that point. Their albums tended to come out in the spring and harkened the onset of the warm weather and many hours spent blasting those spirited tunes. "Toys In The Attic" and "Rocks" followed in '75 and '76, respectively. For my money, "Rocks" is still one of the best rock albums ever and kicks my ass to this day—side two is perfection, especially the leadoff 1-2 bludgeon of "Sick As A Dog" and the super-heavy "Nobody's Fault." "Rats In The Cellar," "Combination" and "Lick And A Promise" shouldn't be overlooked, either. "Toys" also has its moments, although I found the big-band swing of "Big 10 Inch Record" kitschy even then—swing revival 23 years before it became trendy but it still sucked. No suck in sight for the title track, the surging, melodic "No More, No



Aerosmith's "Seasons Of Wither."

Anyway, that's a function of their age, of course, and my being an old fart (well, at least I'm a relatively young fart among the columnists here—what a refreshing twist!) means that my points of reference date back to the 60s and 70s. Except for the second generation heshers, who got the Zep and Sabbath records passed down from their dads or uncles, there's a decided lack of appreciation for, say, a Uriah Heep or Blue Oyster Cult. Aerosmith are such a pathetic parody of themselves at this point that many folks don't understand how great those guys were in the mid 70s. So I've decided to use my first column in this embryonic publication to wax unabashedly wistfully and with more than a degree of adoration for the music of my bygone, pre-punk rock youth. At the outset, let me state that most of these tunes are readily available on CD but I prefer the vinyl experience. Now that I reside in a house instead of a cramped two bedroom apartment and have some space for all the crap accumulated over the years, I've been rediscovering and rebuilding my 70s vinyl collection and, crackles 'n all, it never sounded so good.

An adolescence spent in a suburban bedroom listening to records on a crappy turntable while devouring music reference books. Not the most productive way to spend my time, I suppose, but there wasn't all that much else to do. I didn't want to run around with the stoners or jocks or whatever 70s social group you could think of and, to be

More" and chord on chord crush of "Round and Round." "Walk This Way" was a deserving hit, as well. The chink in the armor came for the disappointing "Draw The Line," although it had its moments... but that album came out in the fall of '77 and my attention was turning to punk. The first four albums remain mantra and if your only exposure to Aerosmith is the song-doctor hackwork they've been churning out since the mid-80s, I don't blame you for thinking they suck. But that wasn't always the case...

The summer of '76 was a real time of personal musical enlightenment. "Rocks" was getting plenty of turntable time and it was also when I picked up a used copy of Iggy's "Raw Power" album at a headshop for 3 bucks. Damn, what a life-changer. Of course, everyone knows about this album's greatness now, but Iggy's profile wasn't all that high at the time and this was quite a wonderful discovery. It was as if the proprietor of the shop knew what I needed and when he slapped that album on in the store, I was hooked. It was also the time when I got my first Blue Oyster Cult albums. I'd read about the band in a paperback book called "Rock Revolution" and the great Lester Bangs had written a chapter about heavy metal. The way he described the

"white-hot screeching guitars, the guitars that destroyed the world," I had to check this shit out. My grandmother had taken me into Boston on a shopping excursion and offered to buy me some records, so I had her plunk down the cash for Thin Lizzy's "Jailbreak" (not a bad album, especially the title track and "The Boys Are Back In Town," but also spotty) and the Cult's live double, "On Your Feet Or On Your Knees." The effect wasn't immediate, but after repeated listenings, their cleverness and brainy rockitude began to sink in. It wasn't quite what I expected, after Brother Lester's testimony, but there was something to it. The Cult's brilliance became more apparent when I went back to the head shop and picked up a used copy of their third album, "Secret Treaties," with the hard-driving "ME-262" and "Dominance & Submission." It wasn't the purity of volume provided by Aerosmith, but those songs sank their way into my brain. So did "The Red & The Black" and "Hot Rails To Hell" off "Tyranny and Mutation" (album number two, following their eponymous debut). That's probably my favorite Cult album, a blend of fiery rockers and moodier, darkly-hued savagery done with subtlety and nuance. The thing about the Cult was the tongue was very deeply in cheek and they didn't let onto the joke too easily... I suppose the songs about the WWII firefights, fearing the reaper and harvesting eyes (written by their pal

ALQUINT

Richard Meltzer) should have been a dead giveaway but, like I said before, I was young. "Agents Of Fortune," with "Don't Fear The Reaper," isn't in that league, though. Funny, it came out at the time I was discovering their older albums and by the time I got around to "Agents," late in the summer of '76, it seemed watered-down. Another band that were never as good after that but those albums up to "On Your Feet" are still worth hearing.

Well, this is starting to get long, so I'll close by mentioning a few more 70s favorites. That red-cover Grand Funk album mentioned before is a boogified keeper and features some gloriously fuzzy bass and guitar parts. The drill-press guitar effect for "Paranoid" makes it worthwhile, alone. Sweet put out some killer albums in the 70s, before they gave themselves over to the glossy pop of "Love Is Like Oxygen."

They started out as bubblebum boys but eventually threw off the shackles of the Chinnichap songwriting factory and started writing their own burners. "Desolation Boulevard" was a merger of two worlds, pop and hard rock and they balanced it

***Except for the second generation hes-
hers, who got the Zep and Sabbath
records passed down from their dads
or uncles, there's a decided lack of
appreciation for, say, a Uriah Heep or
Blue Oyster Cult.***

well with "Ballroom Blitz," "Set Me Free" and "Fox On The Run." "Give Us A Wink" is a kick-ass hard rock album and, unfortunately, out of print... there is a collection CD available on Capitol, but it has an inferior version of "Action." Try to find the original if you can. "Action" is a fuckin' anthem and they keep up the volume attack for "Yesterday's Rain," "White Mice" and "Cockroach." Sizzling guitars and impossibly high vocal harmonies.

I can't end this column without mentioning Uriah Heep. Pompous and pretentious and so over the top that you can't help but be charmed by their audacity. And "Easy Livin'" is one rockin' song. Another band with ridiculous harmonies (the "oo-ah" for "Bird Of Prey" will have you convulsing with laughter) to go along with David Byron's ludicrously excessive vocals, Mick Box's guitar buzz and pumped-up organ of Ken Hensley. "Gypsy" features an insane closing organ solo, after the main riff has been numbed into your consciousness for six straight minutes. A classic...

Hey, I also publish my own 'zine called Suburban Voice. For mailorder info or for any other comments/correspondence, e-mail me at alellen@shore.net or write to me at PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903. Next time, perhaps something less self-indulgent. Or maybe not... ⊕

SHITLIST

Welcome to the Hit List record review section, which we've affectionately entitled "Shitlist". Why, other than the fact that L7's "Shitlist" is a bitchin' rock 'n' roll song? Because most of the records that come out these days are shitty, and hence can be said to be on our shitlist. As a diehard fan of rock 'n' roll, I feel a constant urge to make other diehard fans aware of the existence of great bands and great records, not to mention steer them clear of the flood of mediocre and piss-poor releases which are an inevitable byproduct of the DIY ethos characteristic of punk culture. Certainly this DIY ethos has its good side, in that virtually anyone has the ability to make a record, however lacking in resources they may be. But the downside is that anyone and everyone, including the utterly talentless and hopelessly mediocre, now have the means to subject other people to their awful racket. In practice, the result is that in any given month, hundreds of 45s, EPs, LPs, and CDs are released, the vast majority of which aren't worth hearing. Unfortunately, that means that it's necessary to wade through a huge mass of flotsam and jetsam in order to discover a very small number of gold nuggets which alone serve to make the entire process worthwhile. Still, it's depressing for music fans to have to spend hours and hours listening to crap before stumbling across the vinyl equivalent of "nirvana". I suppose one might argue that the time and effort which one wastes end up making the discovery of gold that much sweeter, but personally I'd like to be able to find out about the great stuff without being subjected to boatloads of dross.

Fortunately for you, dear reader, that's the job our intrepid reviewers have taken it upon themselves to perform. We shall act as sacrificial lambs (by subjecting ourselves to the sonic equivalent of torture) so that you won't have to. How masochistic and altruistic can we be? Well, not very. We are in fact acting solely on the basis of our own selfish interests. We're trying to get ahold of all the

good records before you can, and we're only turning you on to them because we're opinionated assholes who want to foist our tastes upon the ignorant, unwashed masses. It certainly isn't because we're really willing to suffer like martyrs for your collective sins of laziness and inertia. Alas, in spite of our rampant selfishness, you all inadvertently end up benefitting, if only because you don't have to throw away years of your pathetic lives actually listening to all the garbage that's out there. Lucky you.

And so, without further ado, let me introduce you to our indefatigable reviewers: Jeff Bale (JB); Kitty Bartholemew (KB); Jimi Cheetah (JC) of SCREW 32, TILT, and Cheetah's Records; Kevin Cross (KC) of the GOODFELLAS, BIG RIG, and the NERVE AGENTS; Dave Johnson (DGJ); Barrie Hellbilly of CHRIST ON PARADE, the HELLBILLIES, and PLAN 9; Ramsey Kanaan (RK) of AK Press; Greg Lowery (GL) of Rip Off Records; Brett Mathews (BAM) of Coldfront and Sin City Records; Chuck Pettry (CP) of Alternative Tentacles Records; Jade Pudget (JP) of A.F.I. and LOOSE CHANGE; Ian Randumb (IR) of the RANDUMBS; Nick 13 of TIGER ARMY; and Jami Wolf of Man's Ruin Records (JW). In the future, we'll undoubtedly be incorporating additional reviewers into our current lineup, in particular more experts on 60s music and some truly obnoxious motherfuckers who favor only the most primitive and garage-oriented sounds.

It's important at this point to clarify one important distinction between a fanzine proper and a rock 'n' roll magazine such as Hit List, which has pretensions of providing more or less comprehensive coverage of new punk-oriented and underground rock releases. If I was the editor of a pure "fanzine", i.e., a music zine that reflected solely my own idiosyncratic tastes, there would be no coverage whatsoever herein of sappy pop punk (as opposed to good pop punk in the RAMONES, UNDERTONES, and BOYS vein), slick "professional"

punk, pretentious navel-gazing "emo", or dorky "straight edge" hardcore. All you'd be reading about in a Jeff Bale fanzine would be proto-punk, 77 punk, garage punk, 60s punk, Oi, various British invasion subgenres, glam, psychobilly, and guitar heavy power pop. Period. Certainly you would never see rave reviews for wussie college radio bands like J CHURCH and JETS TO BRAZIL in it, and stuff appearing on labels such as Fat, Epitaph, and Lookout would be almost entirely displaced by releases from primitive punk labels like Crypt, Estrus, Get Back, Headache, Junk, and Rip Off. Alas, this is not my personal fanzine. Hence we are obliged to cover most releases that fall broadly within the punked-out rock 'n' roll category, including a shitload of garbage that I personally detest. In short, the record review section of Hit List has to serve as a relatively neutral ground in which all sorts of underground rock 'n' roll releases can receive a fair hearing. As such we generally make an effort to distribute records to reviewers who are general fans of the style of music found in their grooves, as opposed to reviewers who hate the entire musical subgenre within which they fall. An unfortunate byproduct of this policy is that more records get good reviews than actually deserve to—regardless of which particular style of music you happen to like. It is therefore incumbent upon you, dear reader, to familiarize yourself with the peculiar tastes of each of our reviewers so that you won't be misled by their reviews. At the very least, keep in mind that each review reflects only the taste of its author, not that of our entire staff. As in other contexts, one must read critically.

At present we can't pretend to be able to provide as comprehensive a coverage of new punk releases as MRR and Flipside, which after all have been around for almost two decades and receive hundreds of obscure one-off releases from all over the world every month in addition to releases on all of the larger underground labels. But I am confident that within a very short period of time we will be able to do so, and until then the vinyl junkies who currently serve

as Hit List reviewers will be exploiting their individual contacts and actively seeking out such obscurities so that we can evaluate them for the benefit of our readers, not to mention add them to our own record collections. I also urge every punk label out there, big or small, to send us their new releases so that we are able to increase our coverage to the levels currently found in these other venerable publications as rapidly as possible. In this context, we won't be able to help you if you don't help us.

In any event, in order to give you a better idea of the type of crap our sorry reviewers like—myself included—I present you with our retrospective/current "Top 10" lists below:

Jeff Bale

Ramsey's Top Ten

(NO PARTICULAR ORDER)

1. HUSKER DU-EVERYTHING
2. ATOM & HIS PACKAGE-EVERYTHING
3. DILLINGER FOUR-MIDWESTERN SONGS OF THE AMERICAS
4. DESCENDENTS-ALL OF IT
5. NOFX-WHITE TRASH/PUNK IN DRUBLIC
6. LEATHERFACE-EVERYTHING
7. LAST RESORT-EVERYTHING
8. VAPORS-GREATEST FUCKING BAND EVER
9. U.K. SUBS-ENDANGERED SPECIES
- 9.5. PUBLIC IMAGE-SECOND EDITION
- 9.75. ZOUNDS-EVERYTHING
10. ADVERTS-CAST OF THOUSANDS

Jami's Top Ten

1. HELLCOPTERS-SUPERSHITTY TO THE MAX/PAYIN' THE DUES
2. COCKSPARRER-SHOCK TROOPS
3. ANTISEEN-HONOUR AMONG THEIVES/SOUTHERN HOSTILITIES
4. TURBONEGRO-APOCALYPSE DUDES/ASS COBRA
5. REAL KIDS: DEC 18TH/HELLCOPTERS DEC 18TH/ PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES/REDUCERS SF SEPT.25TH
6. BACKYARD BABIES-KNOCKOUTS!
7. GAZA STRIPPERS-LACED CANDY
8. THE KIDS -REISSUE FIRST TWO RECORDS/ SNUKY TATE EP
9. AUSTIN'S FINEST: THE BULEMICS, THE CHUMPS, THE RIVER CITY RAPISTS
10. JOHNNY THUNDERS AND THE HEARTBREAKERS-DTK: LIVE AT THE SPEAKEASY /SONIC'S RENDEZVOUS BAND-SWEET NOTHING

THE HIT LIST

Jimi's Top Ten

5 OF ALL TIME:

1. THE STOOGES-RAW POWER
2. BLACK FLAG-THE FIRST 4 YEARS
3. THE BIG BOYS
4. DEAD KENNEDYS-PLASTIC SURGERY DISASTERS
5. THE MINUTEMEN-DOUBLE NICKELS ON THE DIME

5 OF 98'

- SLOPPY SECONDS
ELECTRIC FRANKENSTIEN
BORIS THE SPRINKLER
MORAL CRUX
TEEN IDOLS

Kitty's Top Ten

1. MELT-BANANA CHARLIE
2. TALK IS POISON
3. R.L. BURNSIDE
4. CORNERSHOP'S MERGE RELEASE
5. MOUNT SHASTA
6. DEPARTMENT-H - CRAZY JAPANESE COMPILATION
7. FAT BOY SLIM
8. ZEN GUERRILLA
9. CALEXICO
10. THE EX

Kevin's Top Ten

1. THE MISFITS-BOX SET
2. T.S.O.L.-DANCE WITH ME
3. BLACK FLAG-THE FIRST FOUR YEARS
4. CIRCLE JERKS-GROUP SEX
5. DEAD KENNEDYS-IN GOD WE TRUST, INC.
6. DICK DALE-THE BEST OF...
7. THE METEORS-WRECKIN' CREW
8. AGENT ORANGE-LIVING IN DARKNESS
9. SLAYER-REIGN IN BLOOD
10. JOY DIVISION-UNKNOWN PLEASURES

Jeff's Top Ten

1. CLIT COPS-FUCK 'N' ROLL 10" EP
2. LEAVING TRAINS-FAVORITE MOOD SWINGS CD
3. LOLI & THE CHONES-P.S...WE HATE YOU CD
4. REAL KIDS-LIVE
5. SHIFTERS-MIX IT UP EP
6. STALLIONS-HEY BABY, IT'S... CD
7. TURBONEGRO-APOCALYPSE DUDES CD
8. V/A-GOIN' AFTER PUSSY CD
9. V/A-MAXIMUM FREAKBEAT CD

10. V/A-NOBODY TO LOVE CD

Dave's Top Ten

1. JAWBREAKER-24 HOUR REVENGE THERAPY
2. JETS TO BRAZIL-ORANGE RHYMING DICTIONARY
3. AVAIL-OVER THE JAMES
4. DILLINGER FOUR-MIDWESTERN SONGS OF THE AMERICAS
5. SCREECHING WEASEL-TELEVISION CITY DREAM
6. LAG WAGON-LET'S TALK ABOUT FEELINGS
7. J CHURCH-CAT FOOD
8. ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE-BEHOLD, I SHALL DO A NEW THING
9. MORAL CRUX-SOMETHING MORE DANGEROUS
10. METALLICA-GARAGE, INC.

Jade's Top Ten

1. REFUSED-THE SHAPE OF PUNK TO COME
2. SWINGIN' UTTERS-FIVE LESSONS LEARNED
3. GOOD RIDDANCE-BALLADS FROM THE REVOLUTION
4. NERVE AGENTS-S/T
5. AT THE DRIVE-IN- IN/CASINO/OUT
6. FURY 66-FOR LACK OF A BETTER WORD
7. JETS TO BRAZIL-ORANGE RHYMING DICTIONARY
8. SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE-HOW IT FEELS TO BE SOMETHING
9. NOFX-SO LONG AND THANKS FOR ALL THE SHOES
10. OFFSPRING-AMERICANA...EXCEPT THAT ONE SONG

Brett's Top Ten

1. ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN- ANY WITH STEVE ON VOX
2. AC/DC 74-84 STUFF
3. STIV BATORS- STIV, DEAD BOYS AND L.O.T.N.C.
4. AVAIL-EVERYTHING
5. DESCENDENTS-EVERYTHING
6. JAWBREAKER-PICK ONE
7. JOHNNY THUNDERS-L.A.M.F.
8. MORAL CRUX-EVERYTHING
9. HOT WATER MUSIC-FUEL FOR THE HATE GAME
10. RICK SIMS-DIDJITS, LEE HARVEY, AND GAZA STRIPPERS

A.F.I

"A Fire Inside" 7" EP

It may be slightly biased but this 4-song EP is fucking good, so go to hell. It includes two originals and two covers, "Demonomania" by the MISFITS and a great rendering of "The Hanging Garden" by the CURE. The lyrics read like gothic poetry, and the tunes are punk with a hardcore flavor. You didn't hear it from me, but get this. (JP)

(ADELINE—P.O. Box 11470—OAKLAND, CA 94611)



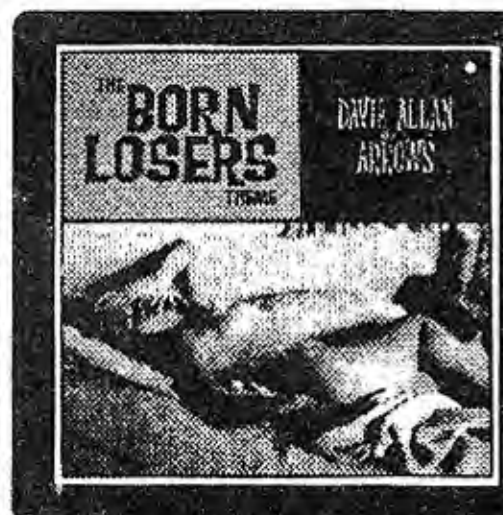
4

DAVIE ALLAN & THE ARROWS

"The Born Losers Theme/The Glory Stompers" 7"

The good: the king of fuzz guitar is back, and you're only getting burned for a 7". The bad: I've already heard these songs before. The ugly: this is previously released shit that's supposedly re-recorded, which makes it a rip off. How many more times will this be reissued? (GL)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



4

AMERICAN STONEHENGE

"Lucidnation" CD

The good: my CD player has an off button. The bad: hippy horseshit. Take some acid and peyote, and start flying. The ugly: if you don't bathe and wear bellbottoms, this is for you. (GL)

(BRAINLOSS—1015 N. KING'S ROAD #313—LA, CA 90069)



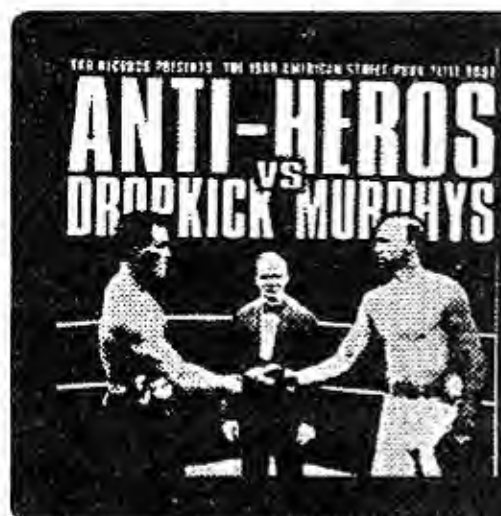
4

ANTI HEROES/DROPKICK MURPHYS

"Street Punk Title Debut" double 45

It's ironic that TKO would put out the last DROPKICK single with their original singer and their first single with their new singer. The title describes this record better than I could. The two kings of contemporary street punk go at it on this four A-side 7". And the winner is you, if you happen to own it. (BAM)

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 91444)



4

ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE

"Behold, I Shall Do a New Thing" 7" EP

ATOM, nee Adam Goren, and his trusty QY700 Yamaha sampler team up this time for another bout of electronically charged humor and pathos. The first song is a logical if rather comical rant against feet, pounds, yards, and all the other ass-backwards units of measurement that only Americans seem to cling to. The last song ("Hats Off to Halford") examines the sociosexualpolitical ramifications of the ex-JUDAS PRIEST frontman's acknowledgement of his homosexuality. On his first album, he [who, Atom or Halford?] boldly proclaimed that he "rocks ten times harder than your average punk rock band." The scary thing is, he does. (DGJ)

(ATOM—1904 QUILL LANE—ORELAND, PA 19075)



4.5

AVAIL

"Over The James" LP/CD

A lot of my friends are still stuck on AVAIL's 1993 blast "Dixie," but AVAIL isn't. Lyrically, front-hunk Tim Barry only gets better, and musically the band



has never blended together better on a record. Standout tracks include "Deepwood," "Ask", and the slightly surprising "Lombardy Street." From the opening chords you can tell this record's going to rock, and while there's nothing on here that's quite as mind-bending as "Simple Song" or "F.C.A.", this album is definitely among my top five records of 1998. (DGJ) 5

(LOOKOUT—P.O. Box 11374—BERKELEY, CA 94712)

5

BARON AUTOMATIC

"Wayfunner" CD

Yet another fast and poppy melodic punk band. This one sounds similar to RANCID or GREEN DAY due to the fast, jangly guitars and throaty vocals. Good production and decent songwriting. If you like this kind of music, then you will like this kind of CD. (CP)

(DUMMYUP—P.O. Box 642634—SF, CA 94164)



2

BASEMENT BRATS

"It's All Right/Happy Girl" 45

The A-side showcases pop-punk the way it should be played—with lots of drive, loud guitars, and good hooks—but all too rarely is these days. It more than compensates for the flip, which unfortunately has that sappier, happier East Bay sound that the world could easily do without any more of, especially as far away as Norway. What would TURBONEGRO think? (JB)

(RAPID PULSE—P.O. Box 5075—MILFORD, CT 06460)



3

BILLYCLUB

"Out To Lunch" CD

Despite the "all star" lineup, including members of the EXPLOITED, the UK SUBS, BROKEN BONES/DISCHARGE, and REO SPEEDDEALER, this CD doesn't really do it for me. They've got a tough-guy sound, and mix in a few mid-tempo streetpunk songs with their standard hardcore sound. Overall, this is pretty typical of a bunch of

bands that are either "making a comeback" or at least attempting to do so...twenty years too late. Borrrrrring. (JW)

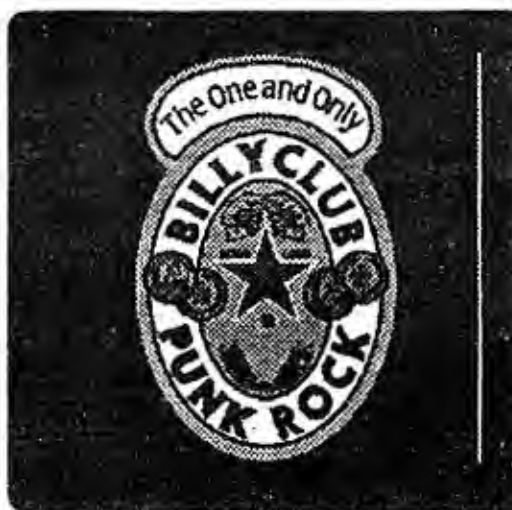
(IDOL—P.O. Box 720043—DALLAS, TX 75372)



2

BILLYCLUB
"Serve Loud" CD

With former members from the EXPLOITED, the U.K. SUBS, and DISCHARGE, how could this disc go wrong? Well, it does. There is occasionally some



interesting guitar work on here, but overall this is dull, bland rock 'n' roll. Don't waste your time with this. You'd do better listening to the other bands these guys have been in. Yawn! (KC)

(COLDFRONT—P.O. Box 8345—BERKELEY, CA 94707)

2

BOOT PARTY
"The Suss" 7" EP

The title track is the standout song on this record. Quick paced, energetic, and very reminiscent of BLITZ. "Johnny Smoothie" is a pretty mediocre Oi song that tends to last a bit too long for my taste. "Firebomb" borders on hardcore, and is nothing memorable. Overall, pretty generic. (JW)



(VULTURE ROCK—P.O. Box 40104—ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)

2

BORIS THE SPRINKLER
"(She Digs My) New Wave Records" 7" EP

More fun power pop along the lines of the BUZZCOCKS, just what you've come to expect from BORIS. The inside of the



single has their complete discography, and I think this is their zillionth release. My favorite was "Hi, We're the Replacements." (CP) 3

(MUTANT POP—5010 NW SHASTA—CORVALLIS, OR 97330)

3

BUILT TO LAST
"Built To Last" CD EP

New school hardcore in a metallic vein, this is BUILT TO LAST's sophomore release and a pretty good one at that. Musically this sounds a bit like MADBALL, whereas the vocals remind me of ENSIGN. Though made for the kung fu dancin' hardcore kids, it rocks for everyone. "Broken" and "Burn" are the best tracks. (KC) 3

(RESURRECTION A.D.—P.O. Box 763—RED BANK, NJ 07701)



CHESTERFIELD KINGS
"Wrong from Right/So What" 7"

The C-KINGS have become justly famous for putting out a string of great neo-60's punk records, light years before it had become "trendy" to dig such stuff. Their new 45 certainly isn't up to the high standard set by their best previous releases, but both songs here (one original, one cover) feature way cool guitar tones and bass lines, retro harp and/or Vox organ sounds, and Greg Prevost's undeniably snott-nosed vocals. (JB)

(SUNDAZED—P.O. Box 85—COXSACKIE, NY 12051)



2.5

CHIXDIGGIT
"Born on the First of July" LP/CD

As much fun as this pop punk record is, it unfortunately wore rather thin faster than I would have liked. Sure, there's all sorts of fun little sweet bits that go off in your mouth like Pop Rocks, but as with Pop



REVIEWS

Rocks the fun is somewhat ephemeral. Having said that, there are a few standout tracks: "My Restaurant," a semi-sordid tale of workplace romance; "Sikome Beach," a revved-up end-of-summer-heartbreak tale perfect for rolling around in daddy's Grand Cherokee with the sunroof open; and "Chupacabras," my vote for the album's standout track. (DG)

(HONEST DON'S—P.O. Box 192027—SF, CA 94119)

3

CHUBBIES
"Suburban Rock Dolls" 7" EP

The CHUBBIES write tight, girly-girl pop tunes somewhere



between the BREEDERS and JOSIE & THE PUSSYCATS. This isn't one of their better records, since it's kinda flat, but the band is definitely worth checking out if you like your pop punk sticky-sweet. (JC)

(SUPER SONIC REFRIDGE—VIA BOCCADASSE 33/17—16146 GENOA—ITALY)

2

CLETUS
"More Songs About Other People's Girlfriends" 7" EP

I like CLETUS, and this is the coolest record I've heard from them so far.



Good lo-fi, hi-energy pop punk akin to early Lookout bands like SWEET BABY and CRIMP-SHRINE, which is fitting for modern day Mutant Pop. Side B is the best with "Amy left Me For Some Emo Guy". Another solid singalong release from Charleston, South Carolina's finest. (JC)

(MUTANT POP—5010 NW SHASTA—CORVALLIS, OR 97333)

4

CLIT COPS
"Fuck 'n' Roll" 10" LP

I had seen the lewd ad for this, but for some reason never bothered checking it out. Boy, did I

SHITLIST

blow it. Amazingly raw rock 'n' fucking roll from Germany. There are twelve primitive punk blazers on this, including the standout "Hot Pussy". This would be a fine new addition to anyone's record collection. (BAM)

(INTENSIVE SCARE—P.O. Box 640338—SAN JOSE, CA 95164)



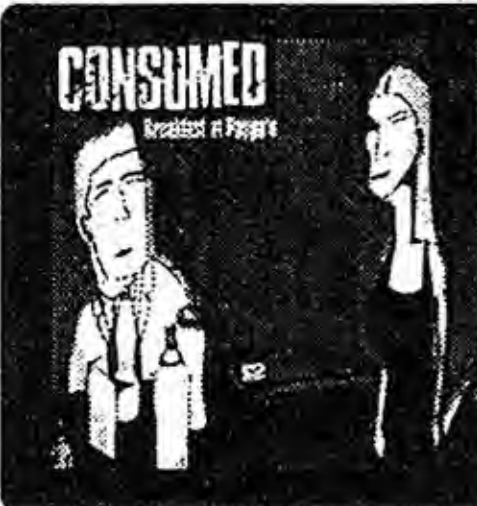
4

CONSUMED

"Breakfast at Pappa's" 7" EP

To be honest, I was disappointed in this record. It was hyped by the folks at Fat as the greatest thing since tofu-salami sandwiches with hummus and croutons, and since I adore most of their output I was expecting a lot. Unfortunately, this English quartet didn't quite live up to my expectations. As a friend so succinctly put it, "They sound like NO USE FOR A NAME playing SNUFF songs." If you're Fat-obsessive, pick this record up; otherwise, go listen to your copy of "Trashed" one more time. (DGJ)

(FAT—P.O. Box 193690—SF, CA 94119)



2

CONVICTED

"No More Asking" CD

In-your-face Oi with gravelly lead vocals, ultra-basic guitars, somewhat sloppy drumming, and radical lyrics (e.g., "kill the rich and empower the poor"). Unlike many of today's phony working class yobs, these guys sound like they actually mean business, as there is a tinge of genuine desperation and anger in many of the songs (especially "Call to Arms"). I'm not exactly sure what sort of revolution they're promoting—I went blind trying to read the miniscule lyrics on the insert—but they'd probably hate your lame ass. (JB)

(NO ADDRESS)



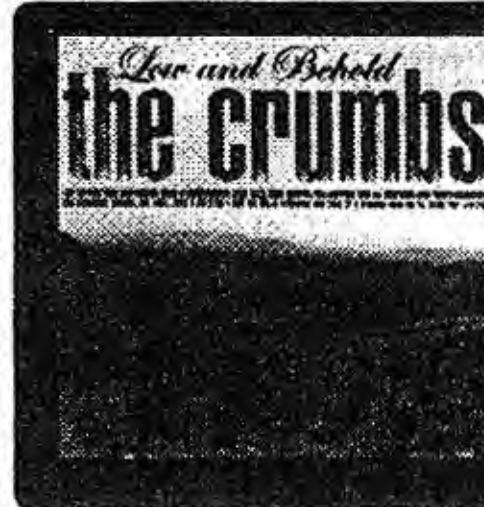
3.5

CRUMBS

"Low And Behold" CD

This one has a lot of 60's style rock 'n' roll, a little bit of MINUTEMEN/FIREHOSE, a little bit of MODERN LOVERS, and it's a lot better than anything else I've heard from them. College radio geeks should really dig this. (JC)

(LOOKOUT—P.O. Box 11374—BERKELEY, CA 94712)



3

CRUSADERS

"Fat, Drunk, and Stupid" CD

Very loud 60s-influenced punk from "down under". The guitars blast out in the characteristic Aussie fashion, but what sets the CRUSADERS apart is their obvious debt to 60s riffs, rhythms, vocal stylings, and lyrical themes. They even include some cool old-school instrumentals ("One Eyed Bikini Monster" and "Fisherman's Basket") amongst the snotty punkers. Not unlike the FUZZTONES at their raunchy, uptempo best, though far less derivative. (JB)

(DIONYSUS—P.O. Box 1975—BURBANK, CA 91507)



4

JEFF DAHL

"I Was a Teenage Glam Fag" CD

On this release, perhaps only the first volume in a series, Jeff Dahl provides us with cool garage punk cover versions of old glam rock songs that inspired him as a youth. Even if you're not hip or old enough to be familiar with the originals, this LP should prove appealing if you like snotty, raw rock 'n' roll songs with good hooks. If you've heard the originals, and thus have some basis for comparison, you'll probably actually prefer some of these punked out versions (as I did with the SKYHOOKS, SUZI QUATRO, MOTT THE HOOPLE, and SILVERHEAD tracks). In cases where it's virtually impossible to improve on the originals (as with the ALICE COOP-



ER and DOLLS' songs), these serve as minimalist yet respectful covers. (JB)

(FAN CLUB ONLY RELEASE)

3.5

DEAD END CRUISERS

"Deep Six Holiday" CD

These guys really, really dig the CLASH, albeit only their first two LPs. Ya know, the undeniably great ones. They even sing about how wonderful the



Hammersmith Palais was (which is very strange, since it closed more than 15 years ago and was a horrible, shitty mainstream venue even when it was open). The CRUISERS' own songs don't quite display the early CLASH's level of polish, production, and songwriting talent, but even a tolerable reproduction of that style makes for an enjoyable record. (RK)

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94114)

3

DEEP REDUCTION

"Black Tulip/Gotta Say No" 45

This 45 almost makes up for DENIZ TEK's awful recent solo CD, as it has the sort of rockin' RADIO BIRDMAN sound that only sissy boy pseudo-punks ever get tired of. Both sides contain tight, guitar-heavy, mid-tempo crunch punkers, but "Gotta Say No" especially shines thanks to its irresistible guitar riff, chorus, and lead break. (JB)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



3.5

DEGENERICS

"No Comply" 7" EP

These guys try really hard to show you how clever they are. Musically, they jump from surfy guitar to upbeat ska to hardcore to a more "crusty" QUINCY PUNX style, then back into slow ska. If



that's not enough, the last song is an indie-rock instrumental that sounds like DINOSAUR JR. or some crap like that. It's not really bad, just generic. The vinyl and cover looks like a thousand other 7"s, with lots of PC info for you to check out, done in the classic collage style. (JC)

(BEER CITY—P.O. Box 26035—MILWAUKEE, WI 53226)

1

DEMONICS

"Formaldehyde Injection" CD

Kind of a revved-up old MEAT PUPPETS sound. OK, but nothing really grabs me about this album. They are probably fun live. Great art by Kozik. (JC)



(MAN'S RUIN—610 22ND STREET #302—SF, CA 94107)

2

DENIZ TEK

"Equinox" CD

A new solo long player by the Yank member and co-founder of seminal Aussie STOOGES-inspired punk band RADIO BIRDMAN. This is much more musically diverse than I expected, especially after seeing the hard rockin' DENIZ TEK BAND only last year. In place of crunchy mid-tempo guitar punkers one finds an eclectic mix of slower and moodier numbers, experimental ditties more akin to "musique concret", and complex songs with lounge flourishes. Not really my cup of tea, but then I'm a well-known r'n'r purist. (JB)

(CITADEL—P.O. Box 316—DARLINGHURST 2010—AUSTRALIA)

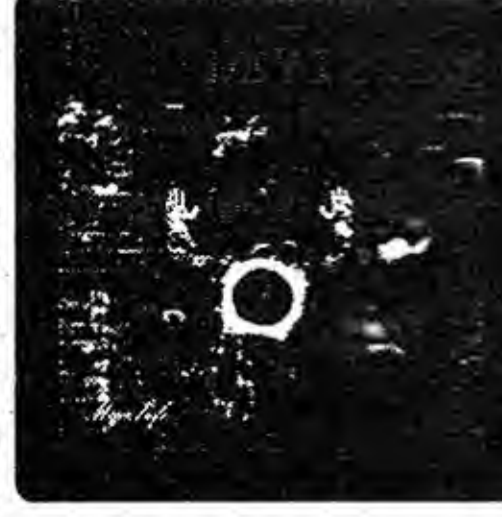


1

DEVIANTS

"My Life" CD

Melodic punk influenced more by the new school than the old, although both eras are represented. "My Life" was produced by Fletcher of PENNY-



WISE and, not coincidentally, this sounds just like

a PENNYWISE album. From guitar tones to vocal styling, this is PENNYWISE, JR. Too many songs on this release sound identical for anything to really shine through. (KC) 2

(THEOLOGIAN—P.O. Box 1070—HERMOSA BEACH, CA. 90254)

2

DILLINGER FOUR

"Midwestern Songs of the Americas"

If there was ever a record that was born for me to love, it's "Midwestern Songs of the Americas". Great lyrics, a political bent, a song entitled "Doublewhiskeycokenoise", and blazing pop-punk to wrap up the package. The three singers trade lines and blend their very distinct voices in very cool ways, and the chord changes aren't your standard obvious pop-punk choices. Choice tracks include "The Great American Going Out of Business Sale," "Secret Powers Enable Me to Blend in With Machinery", and "Portrait of the Artist as a Fucking Asshole." This could be the finest political band since PROPAGANDHI. (DG)

(HOPELESS—P.O. Box 7495—VAN NUYS, CA 91409)



5

DOTFUCKINGCOM

"Hesitation" 7" EP

Yet another winner from Prank Records. Pulsating, grinding fast-core from former members of INITIAL STATE. The music is harsh and the lyrical content deals with personal and social issues. The music is good enough to rise above all the others. Five songs, great band, great name. When's the full-length coming? (CP)

(PRANK—P.O. Box 410892—SF, CA 94141-0892)



4

DROPKICK MURPHYS

"Curse of a Fallen Soul" 45

The DROPKICKS never sounded so good! Maybe it has something to do with former BRUISERS' frontman Al Barr going at it on vocals.

Four strong (Irish) whiskey shots of street punk that will leave you begging for more. (BAM)

Dropkick Murphys



CURSE OF A FALLEN SOUL

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94144)

4

EL DIABLO

"Texas" CD

These guys, along with ROLLER, are steadfastly defending their beloved crowns in the name of generic punk rock music. As with their earlier 7", "Sure As Shit" stands out as that punchy, hilarious song which serves—barely—to save this CD from getting microwaved. All in all, EL DIABLO does not stand up to the other bands Taz has played with, namely TENDERLOIN and the REVEREND HORTON HEAT. (JW)

(COLDFRONT/SIN CITY—P.O. Box 8345—BERKELEY, CA 94707)



2

EL DIABLO

"Texas Rockers" 7" EP

"Texas Rockers" is an alright record, but one has to wonder if these guys would even exist had they never even heard ZEKE (who themselves rip off the DWARVES). It may rock, but there is absolutely nothing new going on here. (JW)

(SIN CITY—P.O. Box 8345—BERKELEY, CA 94707)



2.5

ELECTRIC /HOOKERS
split CD

FRANKENSTEIN

SHITLIST

If this was a battle of the bands, it would be a blood-bath. In case you've been living in a cave, EF play balls-out punk rock 'n' roll a la the DEAD BOYS. All 8 of their tracks are great, but the standouts are "Listen Up, Baby", "Hostage Situation", and "Rocket In My Veins". The HOOKERS are a bit more rock, a bit trashier, and more likely to know firsthand what raccoon tastes like. With lyrics like "Longhaired, red-necked, rock'n'roll motherfucker/ That's what I am", it's easy to tell where they're going. Good, but it quickly gets a little old. (JC)

(MAN'S RUIN / 610 22ND STREET #302 / SF, CA. 94107)



3.5

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN / L.E.S. STITCHES

split 45

EF does MOTOR-HEAD, L.E.S. STITCHES do themselves. What more do you want? A rockin' good time. (JC)



(DEVIL DOLL—P.O. Box 30727—LONG BEACH, CA 90853)

4

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN "How I Rose From the Dead" CD

I just reviewed two EF cd's back to back, and I can't even begin to explain how great it is to have Steve Miller back at the helm. The beauty of this cd is that Steve is actually singing most of the songs from the Scott and Rik era, which now became a million times better. This is a WMFU recording, so it doesn't have the punch of a studio album, but who cares? It's EF. (BAM)

(ONE FOOT RECORDS-PO BOX 30666, LONG BEACH CA 90853)



4

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN "Sick Songs" 10" EP

This record was released a while ago, and it still stands the test of time. Gold stars go out to "Action High" and "I'll Be Standing". These two songs have to be two of the best EF songs ever, mid-tempo and catchy, with anthemic choruses. On side B, "Learn To Burn", "Clockwise", and "Born Wild" continue to pack a punch; all three songs are tuff and upbeat. This record demonstrates why EF still paves the way for a number of up-and-coming punk rock 'n' roll bands. (JW)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



5

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN "Spare Parts" LP/CD

This is the CD version of EF's long gone 10" from Switzerland, plus three live tracks. These songs are from the Scott Wilkins era, which I feel is quite inferior to anything with Steve Miller on vocals. But it's still way better than 90% of the shit out there. If you already have "The Time Is Now" CD, then this should be your next buy. (BAM)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



3.5

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN "Up From The Streets" 7"

It's becoming more and more obvious that ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN seem to be making a crossover into the rawk world. The first track, "Up From The Streets", is a mid-tempo rock song with great, catchy hooks. "Razor Blade Touch" tends to lag a bit, but it still packs a heavy punch due to Steve's snarling vocals and the rather creative guitar/vocal breaks that preface the chorus. (JW)

(COLD FRONT/SIN CITY—P.O. Box 8345—BERKELEY, CA 94707)

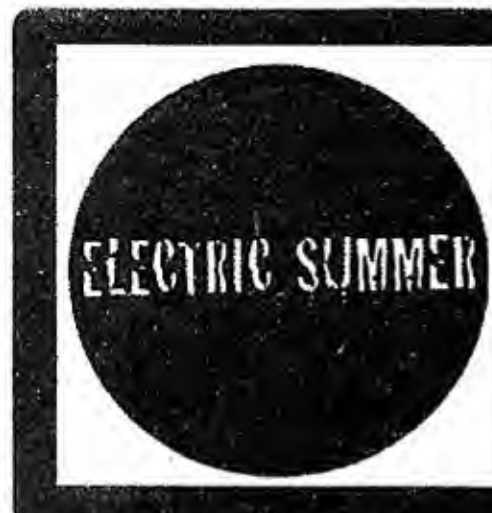


3.5

ELECTRIC SUMMER "Shock" LP/CD

I'm sure there are plenty of people out there who will dig this, the kind of people who think anything that's quirky or ostensibly unintelligible is pure genius, so these guys might end up doing well for themselves. The lyrics are delivered in a screamy whine of broken English, set over jangly guitars which sound like the CIRCLE JERKS at times. I think the lyrics are about girls but, really, it's anybody's guess. Examples: "My petal makes me feel wonderful alone", or "I am jumping with learning back as I am". This just didn't do it for me. (JP)

(SODA JERK—P.O. Box 4056—BOULDER, CO 80306)



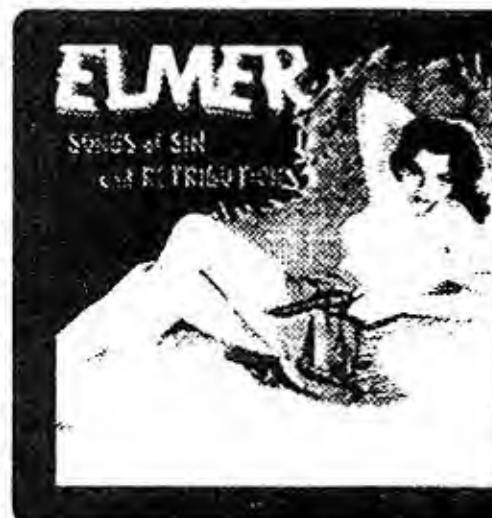
2

ELMER

"Songs Of Sin And Retribution" LP

Barnstorming hillbilly punk. Straight-ahead country version of SCHLONG, who they thank six times in the credits. Cool old Western movie cover and cow vinyl. A good record to get drunk and squaredance to. (JC)

(NO IDEA—P.O. Box 14636—GAINESVILLE, FL 32604/VERY SMALL—P.O. Box 85534—LAS VEGAS, NV 89185)



3

E-TOWN CONCRETE "Time 2 Shine" CD

If 311 had any balls, they might sound like this E-TOWN CONCRETE. This is a metal/hip-hop hybrid that is very reminiscent of what happened when BIOHAZARD got together with ONYX. If you enjoyed the "Judgement Night" soundtrack, you'll love this. Unfortunately, I did not. (KC) 1.5

(RESURRECTION A.D.—P.O. Box 763—RED BANK, NJ 07701)



1.5

FANG

"American Nightmare" LP/CD

This is the first full-length release by these Bay Area punk rock pioneers in ten years, and it's worth picking up for the cover art alone, which is some disgusting, CANNIBAL CORPSE-looking shit. The tunes are rockin'-ass, dirty punk anthems reminiscent of early D.I. crossed with some MOTORHEAD. Tracks like "Boots" and "The Last Resort" have a more Oi feel, and the album is rounded out with a bluesy number complete with harmonica solos. FANG has been around since 1982, except when singer Sammy was locked down for murder, so if you don't already have some of their discs, get off your ass and get this. (JP)

(WINGNUT—1442A WALNUT ST. SUITE 59—BERKELEY, CA 94709)



3

FARTZ

"Because the World Still Stinks!" CD

Many of the ideas expressed in these songs are as relevant today as they were in the early eighties, because the world still stinks! Old school, DIY, anarchic, political hardcore that'll kick you in the ass! The vocalist was Blaine, who subsequently went on to become a member of the ACCUSED, and Duff, later of GUNS 'n' ROSES fame, played drums. If you still hate the religious right and Ronald Reagan, you have to pick this up. (KC)

(ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES—P.O. Box 419092—SF, CA 94141)



4

FATAL FLYIN' GUILLOTEENS

"New Iron Fist" EP

Although displaying an appealingly trashed-out and garagey sound, Texas' FF GUILLOTINES churn out annoyingly arty song structures of the sort that I absolutely abhor. The NATION OF ULYSSES com-



parisons are unfortunately far more apt than the MOTARDS comparisons. This does not rock. (JP)

(TWISTWORTHY—P.O. Box 4491—AUSTIN, TX 78765)

1

FLUF

"Road Rage" LP/CD

The latest outing from O's Hawd Koa Rock 'n' Roll show brings us more detuned (Fender) guitars, upbeat melodies, and commentaries on a few of O's favorite things, such as being large (see "Hang Out"), Jazzmasters and Fords ("George and Leo"). New(ish) drummer Francis Winfield offers up a resounding thwack with at least as much finesse and gusto as his predecessor, Miles Gillett. Occasionally there's a spotty track or two, but fans of the band shouldn't be disappointed. If you're all about the tight, heavy pop music with that SUPERCHUNK-by-way-of-San Diego vibe, there are certainly worse records to add to your collection. (DG)

(HONEST DON'S—P.O. Box 192027—SF, CA 94119)



3.5

FORGOTTEN

"Veni Vidi Vici" CD

The new wave of so-called 'street punk' bands have an at times laughable obsession with all things British. These dudes sing about being pissed up, with their backs to the wall, running wild with the skinheads, and hanging out with the everpresent Johnny. The CLASH were actually British. RANCID and the SWINGING UTTERS set a pretty high standard for wanting to be British, and the FORGOTTEN would clearly like to be like them. Using the Hit List rating system, the early CLASH would get five stars, RANCID would get four, the UTTERS would get three, and the FORGOTTEN would get two.... (RK)

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94114)



2

FRIGGS

"Rock Candy" CD

REVIEWS

The 45 version of "Bad Word for a Good Thing" was a classic slice of neo-60s girl punk, and live the FRIGGS are suitably rockin' and worth ogling. But their new EP lacks guitar power, snottiness, and enough good songs to justify its own existence. Disappointing. (JB)

(E-VIL—P.O. Box 231—OLD CHELSEA STATION—NY, NY 10113)



1.5

FUNERAL

"Have You Seen My Leather Jacket" CD

I suppose Long Beach is close enough to Orange County to enable this band to rock like this. Whether sounding like a primitive ADOLESCENTS or a heavier, dragged out GERMS, this band delivers the goods. I suspect that FUNERAL will continue to be as underappreciated today as they were back in the 80s, when they actually existed. That would be a shame. (BAM)

(GTA—501 W. GLENDALE BLVD, SUITE 313—GLENDALE, CA 91202)



4

GARDY LOO (with "EL DUCE")

"Perverts on Parade" CD

The swan song of recently deceased Eldon Hoke ("El Duce" of MENTORS fame), and it clearly bears his scatological signature. The tone of the entire record is set by the awesome "Squeal Like a Pig", with its hilarious and obnoxious X-rated lyrics (about fucking a fat babe in the ass), distorted punky guitars, uptempo beat, and female screams. Although almost equally "offensive", the remaining tracks are less catchy, far more metallic, and consequently less appealing. Musically only OK, but funny as hell lyrically—check out El Duce's disgusting final rap! (JB)



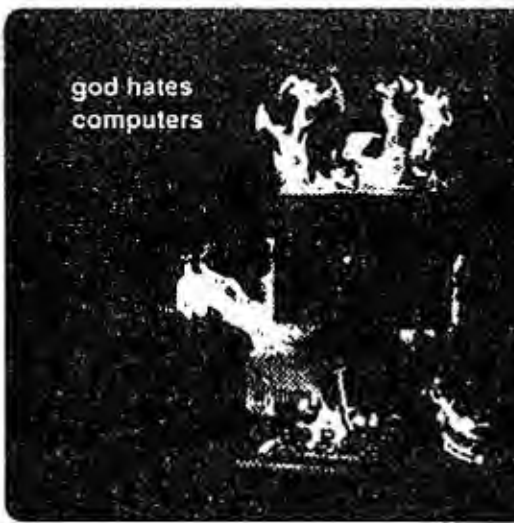
1.5

SHITLIST

GOD HATES COMPUTERS "Morons" 7" EP

Five songs of fast, poppy punk. Similar to SCARED OF CHAKA [Ed.—who?], but more raw and not as poppy. Give them time and they could deliver a great full-length. (CP)

(\$3 TO GHC—P.O. Box 55125—PORTLAND, OR 97238)



2.5

GOONS "Living in America" LP/CD

7 tracks of straightforward and fast punk rock from D.C., co-produced by Brian Baker from MINOR THREAT and BAD RELIGION. Sometimes the singer's voice reminded me of Jello Biafra and, at other times, the singer for the NEW BOMB TURKS. The lyrics deal with how shitty life is and how shitty society is, which is understandable for a band living in D.C. The songs get slightly monotonous at times, but I must say that this shit kinda rocked. (JP)

(TORQUE—P.O. Box 229—ARLINGTON, VA 22210)



3

GOTOHELLS "Burning Bridges" CD

The good: the third LP by these guys, and it's a winner. The main influences seem to be the DEVIL DOGS and the HEARTBREAKERS, and those are the correct influences. The bad: a little overproduced, and some of the song titles are stupid (like "Hot Rod High"). The ugly: if you want loud guitars and catchy songs, get it. (GL)

(VAGRANT—2118 WILSHIRE BLVD #361—SANTA MONICA, CA 90403)



GRIEVING EUCALYPTUS "You're So Lame?" 45

God, what a bad band name, although the title song may be appropriate. The music is OK jangly pop punk, but nothing to write home about. (JC)

(JUST ADD WATER—P.O. Box 16102—SPARTANBURG, SC 29316)



2

HEADCOATS "The Jimmy Reed Experience" 10" EP

The good: if you're a HEADCOATS fan you'll have fun with this one, which pays tribute to bluesman Jimmy Reed. Garagemeister Billy Childish actually sounds cool doing this stuff, which I didn't think I'd say. The bad: not much new here. Another low-fi Childish release. The ugly: I'm a believer now. Sorry for doubtin' ya, Billy. (GL)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



HELLACOPTERS "1995" 7" EP

The HELLA-COPTERS are undoubtedly leading the Scandinavian uprising of punk rawk bands, along with other heavy hitters such as GLUECIFER and TURBONEGRO. "1995" is a re-issue of one of their earliest seven inchers, which was originally released on Sweden's Freak Scene Records. It reeks of the STOOGES and MC5, and features some of the most raw sounding riffs around. This is the kinda shit that proves that there are still excellent rock 'n' roll bands out there. (JW)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



5

HELLACOPTERS "Super Shitty ToThe Max" CD

Awesome record! ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN meets the STOOGES, plus a whole lot more. This is an American reissue of their first full-length from the White Jazz label, with a fuckin' great new cover by Kozik. Respect the rock by buying this album NOW. (JC)

(MAN'S RUIN—610 22ND ST. # 302—SF, CA 94107)



5

HELLBILLYS "Cavalcade of Perversions" CD

"Cavalcade of Perversions" is a HELLBILLYS' singles collection that comes straight outta hell and is recorded in "scary-o". Hot roddin' women, surfin' zombies, buckets of blood, and touches of comic book Satanism are all things that made rock 'n' roll great, and this disc has all that and more. With its rockin' guitar and a rhythm section that'll make you move, this is a must for any psychobilly fan. Contains awesome covers of T.S.O.L.'s "Code Blue" and FEAR's "I Love Livin' in The City". (KC)

(WINGNUT—1442A WALNUT ST. SUITE 59—BERKELEY, CA 94709)



4

HELLBILLYS "Torture Garden" CD

Punk-a-billy from the Bay Area. This isn't traditional rockabilly by a long stretch. In fact, their songs kind of go from punky rockabilly to dark and evil MISFITS-inspired punk. However, the best song on this disc, "Nitro Ghoul," sounds more like MOTORHEAD. I imagine they're a better live band, but this record just don't do it for me. (KB)

(WINGNUT—1442A WALNUT STREET #59—BERKELEY, CA 94709)



2.5

HI-FIVES "Get Down" CD

A few years ago I saw these clean-cut dorks live and hated them. At the time they seemed like a bunch of poseurs who Larry Livermore was promoting in a belated attempt by Lookout to cash in on the renewed popularity of 60s garage bands. Imagine my surprise, then, when I discovered that their latest CD commenced with some memorable beat-influenced songs marked by crisp instrumentation, punchy guitars, and real drive. Unfortunately, most of the remaining tracks proved to be overly wimpy or otherwise less fetching. (JB)



(LOOKOUT—P.O. Box 11374—BERKELEY, CA 94712)

2.5

HIGHWAY STRIPPERS

"Stories For Stags" 7" EP

These guys definitely listen to a lot of ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. However, they are in no way as catchy or as good. Lots of quick, heavy riffage, but no bite.



The guitar leads are way too noisy, dissonant, and basically annoying. (JW)

(MOBCORE—P.O. Box 5177—WAKEFIELD, RI 02880)

1

HISSY FITS

"All Dolled Up/(Decorate)-or-(In My Dreams)" 45

Good pop punk. Side A is a rocker, like the FASTBACKS or maybe TEAM DRESCH. Side B is a classic sugary ballad with big, open chords and la-la-las. (JC)



(MUTANT POP—5010 NW SHASTA—CORVALIS, OR 97330)

3

HOT WATER MUSIC/CLAIRMEL

8.5" split EP

I hear that HOT WATER MUSIC broke up, which has gotta be breaking peoples' hearts since they're the new emo kings. File them somewhere

between JAWBREAKER and the PROMISE RING. The CLAIRMEL side has a heavier, slower sound with gruff vocals, but is otherwise in a similar vein. A great record which must have cost a small fortune to put out. It's on odd-sized colored vinyl, which is perfect for the collector. (JC)



(NO IDEA—P.O. Box 14636—GAINSVILLE, FL 32604)

4

HOUSEBOY

"1465 Tamarack Street Press Room" CD

Fast, poppy and melodic rock from HOUSEBOY. The sound on this CD is really quiet and compressed for some reason. If you can get past this, the music will remind you of MY PAL TRIGGER or millions of other melodic punk bands. Unfortunately, nothing really stood out about this release. (CP)



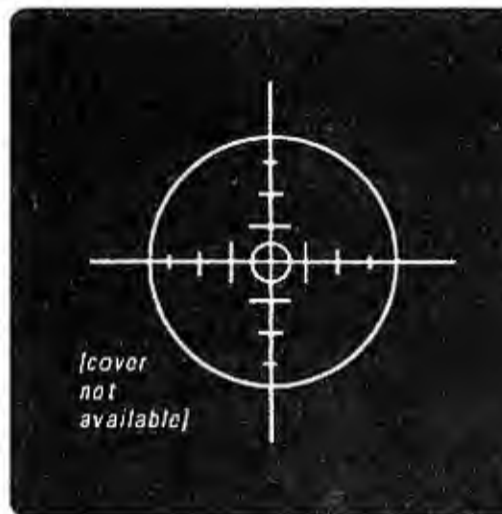
(STIFF POLE—P.O. Box 20721—ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33742)

2

J CHURCH

"Cat Food" CD

Note to Lance Hahn: when are you going to release another American album? This English odds n' sods collection, mostly recorded on that rocky isle, also



contains a few tracks from "Travels in Hyper-Reality" released on Italy's Panic Records. To be honest, I was disappointed with "Travels...", but I'm all about this CD. "The Heroic Trio" may be the best dumb song Lance ever wrote, while "Sound Guy Smiley" and "City by the Bay" demonstrate his ascerbic wit and wry sense of humor in top form. There's also an E.L.O. cover! A solid release from one of my all-time favorite bands [Ed.—you're fired]. (DGJ)

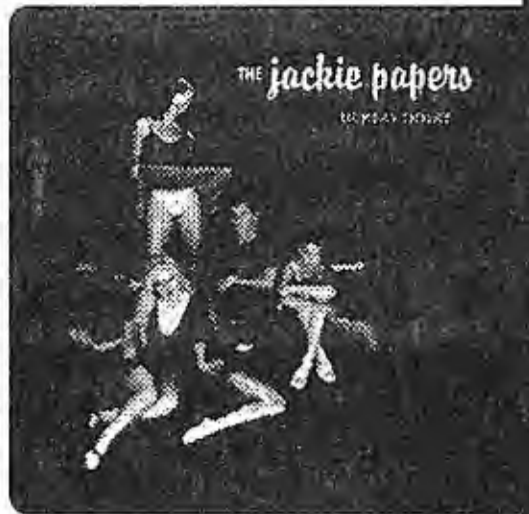
(DAMAGED GOODS—P.O. Box 671—LONDON E17 6NF—ENGLAND)

4

JACKIE PAPERS

"Uckfay Ooyay" CD

"I'm a kook/it's not a fluke/I'm just a kook/I'm a kook/put up your dukes/'cause I'm a kook." My dog could write more inspired lyrics. It's not just the boring, stupid lyrics or the horrible harmonies or the piss poor musicianship that make me cringe, but the CD artwork is pathetic to boot. No amount of pouty, sex kitten cum slut girls is going to redeem this waste of plastic. (KB) 0 stars



(STIFF POLE—P.O. Box 20721—ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33742)

0

JETS TO BRAZIL

"Orange Rhyming Dictionary" LP/CD

As a huge JAWBREAKER fan I told myself going in that this wasn't going to be JAWBREAKER, but found myself surprised since it's actually more JAWBREAKER-esque than I thought it would be. But consider yourself warned—this is not a "punk" record. If you're one of those people who hated "Dear You" you'll loathe this record, but if you loved "Dear You" because it reminded you of Richard Butler and Morrissey, "Orange Rhyming Dictionary" will blow the back of your head off. Blake's lyrics are at turns both heart-rending and life-affirming. (DGJ) 5



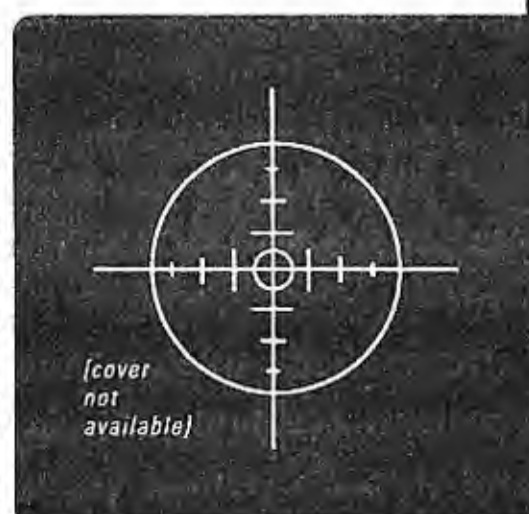
(JADE TREE—2310 KENNWYNN ROAD—WILMINGTON, DE19810)

5

JOAN JETT & THE BLACK-HEARTS

"Fit To Be Tied" CD

The guitar goddess has finally put out her long-awaited "greatest hits" record, which includes punky hook-laden blasts ("Bad Reputation" and "Victim of



SHITLIST

Circumstance"), GARY GLITTER-inspired sing-alongs ("Do You Wanna Touch Me", "I Love Rock N Roll", and "I Hate Myself For Loving You"), and atmospheric rockers ("World of Denial"). Amidst these primo tracks are less noteworthy originals and covers that range from appealing (BOBBI GENTRY's "Make Believe" and TOMMY JAMES' "Crimson and Clover") to unnecessary (SLY's "Everyday People"). It rocks out, mo-fos, which is all you really need to know. (JB)

(BLACKHEART/MERCURY)

4

JUGHEAD'S REVENGE "Just Ruined" CD

The only time I saw these guys live, I left thinking they were very unimpressive and metallic-sounding generic hardcore. Must've been my impending senility.



This new record could fit easily anywhere on the Fat/Epitaph roster. The 13 well-executed songs (including a decent REAGAN YOUTH cover) here run the gamut of styles associated with that genre, with fairly good lyrics about girlfriends dying and punk conformity. Anyone who digs PENNYWISE, NO USE FOR A NAME, or FACE TO FACE will get a kick out of this. (RK)

(NITRO-1071 WARNER AVENUE F-736-HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92647)

3

KAISERS "Squarehead Stomp" CD

The good: what the fuck, why is Jeff only giving me Get Hip stuff to review? The KAISERS are a great 60s-style Scottish beat band that sounds so



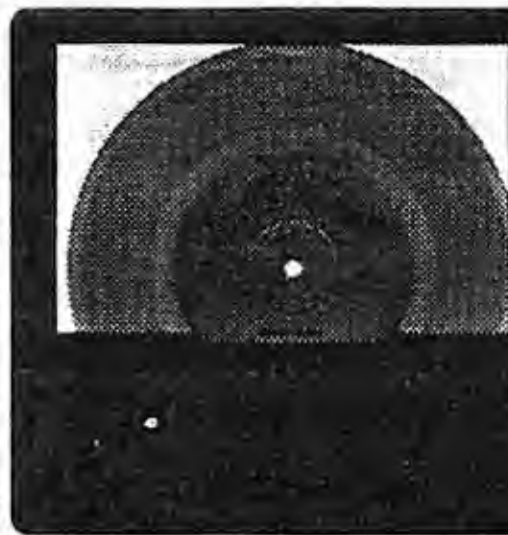
much like the fuckin' BEATLES that I was amazed. This be good music to fuck to. The bad: some of the instrumentals suck. The ugly: fine 60s retro rock. (GL)

(GET HIP-P.O. Box 666-CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

KARATE PARTY "Black Helicopter" 7" EP

Noisy, trebly punk rock with shouted vocals. I was expecting some dumb emo band due to the packaging, but got something more along the lines of the MAKE-UP or PUSSY GALORE. The packaging is bad, and the lines about becoming rock stars and killing your ass are stupid. (CP)

(MOO-LA-LA-1114 21ST STREET-SACRAMENTO, CA 95814)



1

KID DYNAMITE CD/LP

LIFETIME guitarist Dan Yemin is back with a new outfit and it's time to bust out your favorite hoodie, pull your baseball cap down over your eyes, and dust off the air guitar. This, my friends, could well be the new face of hardcore, and if it is I might just start to like hardcore again. KID DYNAMITE are one of those groups that transcend boundaries—they won't just appeal to the testosterone-pumped hardcore kid who hangs around STALAG 13 waiting to kick the ass of the nearby Amish-bearded emo kid as soon as he lights a cigarette, but also to the aforementioned emo kid, his '77 style girlfriend, and her hopelessly unfashionable Camaro-drivin'-mullet-sportin'-Jersey-Hessian older brother, who'll just say "Dude...this fuckin' smokes." (DGJ)

(JADE TREE-2310 KENNWYNN ROAD-WILMINGTON, DE 19810)



4

KRUPTED PEASANT FARMERZ "Peasants by Birth, Farmers by Trade, Krupted by the Dollar" LP/CD

This is a collection of older material from this San Jose outfit, including two live tracks and a FUCK-BOYZ cover. With song titles such as "War on Amerika" and "Society is Puking", you might think this was



dreadlocked crust-core, but these guys lay down some speedy, melodic punk with overtly political lyrics. If that's your bag, this is worth getting. (JP)

(COLDFRONT-P.O. Box 8345-BERKELEY, CA 94707)

3

LAG WAGON "Let's Talk About Feelings" 10" EP/CD

Amazing. After last year's disappointing curveball "Double Plaidinum", LAG WAGON comes back with a record that combines all of the elements that



made this band great.

One of the things that I always enjoyed about LAG WAGON was that they were fully aware that their rock clichés were obvious, yet they managed to incorporate them into their music in such a way that everyone involved—band, audience, and the occasional erstwhile critic—enjoyed it. This album is rife with them—they even titled one song "The Kids Are All Wrong"—and they also finally nailed the production thanks in part to the mixing efforts of Blasting Room buddies Bill Stevenson and Stephen Egerton. I think I like this more than "Hoss". (DGJ) 5

(FAT-P.O. Box 193690-SF, CA 94119)

5

LATCH KEY KIDS "Innocence Gone" CD

These guys obviously cherished their IRON MAIDEN records, as well as their copies of "S&M Airlines" and "Ribbed." For the most part this album plays like an



amalgam of Bruce-era MAIDEN and pre-El Hefe NOFX, but without the passion of any of the aforementioned musicians. Having said that, there are some rather interesting musical moments here, especially in the way the guitars play off the rhythm section. With the right producer this band could probably make a great record, but this one sounds like a bunch of guys playing chord changes to a click track without hearing the other parts. They're on time and in key, but they don't really sound like a band. Competent, but not compelling. (DGJ) 2.5

(PINCHE FLOJO-P.O. Box 431212-HOUSTON, TX 77243)

2.5

LEAVING TRAINS

"Favorite Mood Swings... 1986-1995"
CD

Falling James is one of American punk's unheralded eccentric geniuses. Those of us on the West Coast have witnessed his penchant for nudity and transvestism—



and LEAVING TRAINS' brilliant, chaotic live shows—for years, but what has often been overlooked is how many astoundingly good punk songs he has produced over the years. With this "greatest hits" release, the secret is now out. Check out classics like "She's Looking at You", "27 Days", "Dude the Cat", the vicious "Bob Hope", and "Temporal Slut", but the pinnacle is perhaps "I Love You", which perfectly captures the painful ambiguity of love with its chorus superimposing a poppy "I love you" over a snotty "aw, fuck you/I fucked you". A mandatory purchase. (JB)

(SST—P.O. Box 1—LAWDALE, CA 90260)

5

LOLI & THE CHONES

"P.S., We Hate You" LP/CD

The best 77-style garage punk LP I've heard in years. This platter has everything one could ask for—raw guitars, amazingly snotty alternating male and female



vocals, hilarious lyrics, memorable songs, and a much chunkier production than is typical of Rip Off's trebly norm. Give a listen to stellar tracks like "I Think I'm Gonna", "The Kids from Boyle Heights", "Hot and Bothered", "I Don't" (with its killer "I d-o-n-t like you/And I l-u-v to hate you" chorus), and "Nazi Death Camp" (which compares living at home to being in an extermination camp!), and you can't help but pogo and laugh till it hurts. (JB)

(RIP OFF—581 MAPLE AVENUE—SAN BRUNO, CA 94066)

5

LOOSE CHANGE

"D' is for Delinquent" CD

There's nothing exactly "new" about LOOSE CHANGE, but they do what they do—SoCal-style skatepunk with a NorCal bent—very well. There are great harmonies here, as well as amaz-

ing guitar work from Jade Puget, who has since been tapped for for the axeman's chair in A.F.I. If you miss the stuff Epitaph used to release before the OFFSPRING went supernova and they started putting out CRAMPS and—far worse—STRAIGHT FACED records, you'll definitely groove on this album. Frankly, I'm sorta surprised Fat hasn't picked 'em up yet. (DG)

(NOISE PATCH—P.O. Box 1646—REDONDO BEACH, CA 90178)



4

LOS ASS-DRAGGERS

"Kings of Cheesy" 7" EP

Super high-spaced, lo-fi rock 'n' roll with extremely muffled vocals and very generic chord progressions. I remember when their full-length came out, and I still feel that same about this band—pretty fuckin' lame. Maybe they're better live. (JW)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



1.5

LOUDMOUTHS

"Spit it Out!" 7" EP

The new LOUDMOUTHS EP contains two originals and one cover. All three are abrasive, primitive, and snotty slices of 77-style drunk punk punctuated with female shouting. The title track is the best and the most obnoxious. Definitely not for J CHURCH fans. (JB)

(702—P.O. Box 204—RENO, NV 89504)



3

LOUNGE

"Punk Rock Superheroes" EP

This is one of those bands that tries to touch on every popular punk genre and still maintain some kind of coherency, but often fails in the process. The lyrics are somewhat uninspired and it runs the musical gamut from pop punk to forays

into the Fat Wreck sound, replete with octave chords and token ska verses. The hidden track is a palatable MEN AT WORK cover, but this is pretty predictable fare. (JP)

(TRIPLE CROWN—331 WEST 57TH ST. #472—NY, NY 10019)



2

MOCK ORANGE

"Nines and Sixes" CD

A ten song full-length from this Indiana trio. The sticker on it says "Emo Indie Rock". That alone makes it a juicy target, but I'll try to stick to the music. It rocks out sort of like later period HUSKER DU, which is not a bad thing. A pleasant surprise. (CP)

(BOILED MUSIC/LOBSTER—P.O. Box 1473—SANTA BARBARA, CA 93102)

2.5

MODEL AMERICAN

"We've Had Enough" LP/CD

This is the first full-length by this relatively young Bay Area band—they all look like they could be in high school—and it's a strong effort. "Posi" lyrics set over fast, hardcore-influenced punk that crescendos into big breakdowns. Brings to mind 7 SECONDS and A.F.I., and they even have a song called "Ronald Raygun". (JP)

(VINYL SOLUTION—P.O. Box 6601—SAN MATEO, CA 94403)

3

MOTHERFUCKER 666/STEEL MINERS

split 45

A satirical X-mas release from two old-school punk bands, the latest in a long line of cool seasonal novelty records. MOFO 666 is a famous "fuck band" with Jeff Dahl and ex-PAGAN Mike Metoff, and "High for Christmas" is their cynical mid-tempo paean to altered states of holiday cheer. The STEEL MINERS are a fine new group whose "I Hate Christmas" is faster and more aggressively



SHITLIST

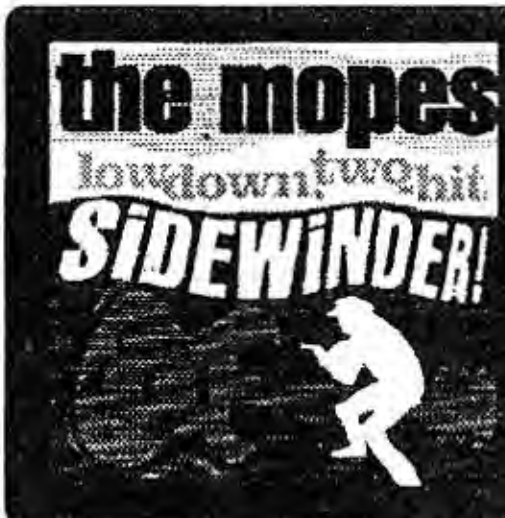
hostile towards the "season to be merry". (JB) 3
(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

3

MOPES

"Low Down Two Bit Sidewinder" CD EP

This is a fun little EP from a bunch of punk rock all-stars, including members of the QUEERS, SCREECHING WEASEL, the GROOVIE GHOULIES, and SQUIRTGUN). Six stupid songs to spazz out to, which musically lie somewhere between QUEERS and CRAMPS. Get this record and be the first on your block to know how to "do the hairball". (JC)
(LOOKOUT—P.O. Box 11374—BERKELEY, CA 94712)



3

MORAL CRUX

"Something More Dangerous" LP/CD

In the past MORAL CRUX produced some good low-fi RAMONES-style pop punk, and this tended to compensate for their sometimes cloying earnestness and sanctimoniousness. On this new release they've unfortunately substituted the sterile and formulaic sound associated with Livermore-era Lookout releases for their earlier punchiness. Despite the presence of a couple of fine tunes ("Beat of Despair" and "Disconnected"), overall this new LP packs little power or emotional impact. (JB)
(PANIC BUTTON—P.O. Box 148010—CHICAGO, IL 60614-8010)



1.5

MULLENS

Mid-tempo garage punk from Tex-ass with a hint of 60s influence and a vague early MISFITS feel. There isn't anything really novel from a musical standpoint



here, but there is an LP's worth of snooty vocals, raw guitars, and superior punk tuneage. Almost every song is pretty damn catchy, and this trait alone lifts the MULLENS above most of their 90s punk peers. A few tracks (such as "Not So Nice") even boast that desirable out-of-control, slightly psychotic quality. (JB) 4

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

4

MURDER CITY DEVILS

"Empty Bottles, Broken Hearts" CD

Put on your dancing shoes, this one's going to make you move that lazy ass of yours. I'm not sure if these guys are rock'n'roll saviors or total fruitcakes—either way, they put out records that are great fun. Music for you to sniff glue and stare at your Iggy Pop poster to. Kind of garagey, but with a big production. Excellent live band. (JC)

(SUB POP—P.O. Box 20645—SEATTLE, WA 98102)

4



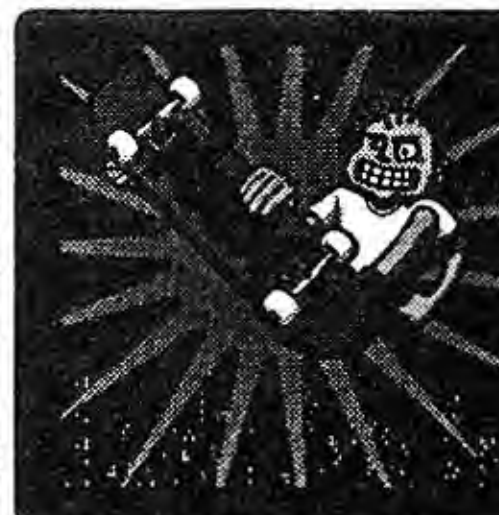
MXPX

"Let It Happen" CD

Apparently, even well-groomed little Christian boys who play good pop punk and wear SOCIAL DISTORTION shirts fall in love, and then get dumped by girls. Who fucking cares? Since when has Christianity ever had anything to do with punk and hardcore!? They can all go fuck themselves, since hopefully the girls won't, but then that would be a sin, right? Let's face it, God doesn't rock. (RK)

(TOOTH AND NAIL, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL, PRESUMABLY)

1



NASHVILLE PUSSY

"Go Motherfucker Go/Milk Cow Blues" 45

When you cross a punk attitude, AC/DC-style riffing, and T & A, it's hard to go wrong. Hence NASHVILLE PUSSY's well-deserved success. "Go Motherfucker Go" showcases the band in its best smash-mouth mode, and boasts a beligerent singalong chorus and dirty lead guitar

break to boot. The flipside is a southern fried, trash-talkin' cover of "Milk Cow Blues". Nasty, nasty. (JB) 4

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

4



NEVERFALL

"Symbols of Inner Self" CD EP

METAL UP YOUR ASS!! NEVERFALL probably call themselves a hardcore band, but they sound like they are more influenced by CANNIBAL CORPSE than MINOR THREAT. The playing on this CD, though none too original, is heavier than a steamroller, and the vocals are mean and scary. Falling somewhere between early SEPULTURA and DEICIDE, this is a good release done in a death metal style. (KC)

(SHANDLE—P.O. Box 1032—MENTOR, OH 44061)

3.5

NIKKI THE SPRINKLER / BORISITES

7" split EP

This is some wacky hybrid of Rev. Norb singing with the PARASITES, and Dave Parasite singing with BORIS THE SPRINKLER. There are two songs each, one original and one cover with a teenage theme. All are pretty entertaining, but none are as good as those of the regular bands. Worth picking up if you're a fan of either. (JC)

(JUST ADD WATER—P.O. Box 16102—SPARTANBURG, SC 29316)

3



NITWITZ

"It Shows In Your Face" 7" EP

Punk Rock! It sounds like Rob Halford from JUDAS PRIEST [Ed.—say it isn't so] singing for the MISFITS. Great cover. (JC)

(INTENSIVE SCARE—P.O. Box 640338—SAN JOSE, CA 95164)

3



NEANDERTHALS

"The Latest Menace to the Human Race" CD

The good: from Nashville, these guys wear cavemen outfits on stage and play trashy 50s music with lots of covers. The bad: your grandma used to listen to this shit, and music is too tame on CD. The ugly: you've heard it all before, but they're probably great fun live. (GL)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



NOTHING COOL

"What A Wonderful World" CD

It's always a risk, I think, for bands to play cover versions. Often their own material is shown up to be painfully lacking in comparison. And certainly, the versions of MEN AT WORK's seminal "Down Under" and the FIVE STAIRSTEP's "O-H-H Child" stand out amongst the 8 tracks on this mini-CD. Fortunately, the 6 originals rattle along at a suitably snotty pace. These guys have obviously dug classic SCREECHING WEASEL, and that can never be a bad thing. (RK)

(DUMMYUP—P.O. Box 642634—SF, CA 94164)



REVIEWS

OUTPATIENTS

"Hardcore Outcasts Revisited, 82-84" CD

Coming from an era when punk and hardcore were synonymous, not to mention joined together in one scene, are the OUTPATIENTS. Most of the stuff on here is from a basement tape that the band recorded in 1983, so the sound quality kinda sucks. But the energy of the band is captured. No songs stand out enough to turn these guys into genre legends, except perhaps "Backwards Explosion", which also appears on Flipside's second compilation LP. Get this CD if you are a fan of hardcore when it was young and still punk. (KC)

(FREE ASSOCIATION NYC—P.O. Box 123—NY, NY 10185)



NEW WAVE HOOKERS

"Saturday Night Hooker" 12" EP/CD

Portland is a town filled with good punk bands and clubs (especially E.J.'s), but one of my favorite groups when I lived up there were the HOOKERS. At their best they have a kind of degenerate DOLLS/HEARTBREAKERS-influenced sound, all gruff alcohol- or drug-filtered vocals, lurid lyrics, and dirty guitars. This is displayed to optimal effect on the title track, "Lipstick", and "Stone Age Romeo", although live I recall their songs being a bit more uptempo. Junk Records once again exhibits its fine lowlife taste. (JB)

(JUNK—P.O. Box 1474—CYPRESS, CA 90630)



ONE HIT WONDER

"Outfall" CD

The good: loud, catchy SoCal punk that is sure to please the majority. The bad: these guys are too professional and have a glossy sound. This should be on all those modern rock stations any day now, if it already isn't. The ugly: not my style at all, but your dorky self will probably like it. (GL)

(NITRO—7071 WARNER AVENUE, SUITE F-736—HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92647)



PARASITES

"Rat Ass Pie" CD

This is the sort of total "feel-good", happy-go-lucky pop crap that passes for dangerous punk rock these days. Is this what little suburban kids listen to when they're hangin' out in front of Dairy Queen or Dunkin' Donuts on Friday night? Maybe this is what the kids are buying, but as far as I'm concerned you couldn't give this shit away. (JW)

(GO KART—P.O. Box 20—PRINCE STREET STATION—NY, NY 10012)

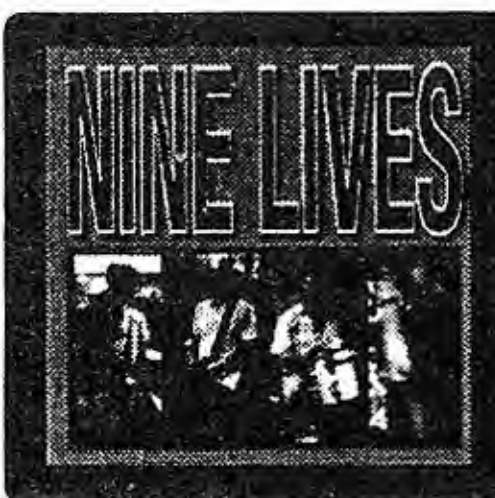


NINE LIVES

"Reignition" CD EP

Six songs of mediocre (at best) melodic rock. They thank NO DOUBT and the MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES, if that gives you any indication. It's so slick and overproduced that the production itself takes away any bite or edge it might have had. Makes me want to listen to the new GASP record. (CP)

(MENDIT—P.O. Box 1096—NY, NY 10003)



ONE MAN ARMY

"Dead End Stories" CD

Melodic mid-tempo 78ish punk with tight instrumentation, prominent drums, good lead vocals, and the traditional singalong choruses. Some of the songs have exceptional hooks (e.g., "Another Dead End Story" and "Stuck in the Avenues"), but on first listen others are hard to distinguish from one another, insufficiently aggressive, or even a bit formulaic. There's certainly nothing wrong with the formula, but more surly attitude couldn't hurt. (JB)

(ADELINE—P.O. Box 11470—OAKLAND, CA 94611)



PETE BEST COMBO

"Beyond the Beatles, 1964-1966" CD

After being replaced as the BEATLES drummer in 1962 by Ringo Starr, Pete Best assembled another (Mersey)beat band and sought to cash in on "Beatlemania" by recording some studio sessions and touring some clubs in America. The stu-



SHITLIST

dio recordings they made have now been collected on this CD, and amply confirm the wisdom of the BEATLES' decision to get rid of Best. The drumming is generally pedestrian, and with a few exceptions (like "I'll Try Anyway" and "The Way I Feel About You") the songs are eminently forgettable. Only music historians could find this of much value. (JB) 1

(GRIFFIN—P.O. Box 87587—CAROL STREAM, IL 60188)

1

PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES

"Alien Pubduction" CD

Peter and the lads are back with a release that falls a little short of the fun and excitement they once possessed, but this is still pretty good. If you've been a fan of this band for some time, this is worth checking out just to see what they're doing now. "Talk Show", "Legless", and "Twenty Years" are definitely the high points of this CD, though "The Nutter" weighs in as the worst piece of instrumental rubbish they've ever written. The cover looks like a rave flyer, with an alien drinking a beer—at least its not wearing a Dr. Seuss hat!—but don't let that fool you. It still sounds like the mighty PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES. (KC)

(Pub City Royal—4104 24TH STREET #376—SF, CA 94114)



3

PHANTOM SURFERS & DAVE ALLAN

"SkaterHater" CD

"An Instrumental Rock Opera in Three Acts", says the press release. Fuzzy, reverb-drenched surf guitar combined with really poppy 60's vocals make for an interesting listen. It really drags in some places, but anyone who hates skaters is AOK in my book. (CP)

(LOOKOUT—P.O. Box 11374—BERKELEY, CA 94712)



3

PILSNER

"Autosuggestion" CD

Heavy-duty power chord punk rock—with an emphasis on the rock—in the early SUPERSUCKERS or HELLACOPTERS vein, which can only be a good thing. I've always been a sucker for hook-laden, uptempo punk with chunky twin guitars, piercing leads, belligerent vocals, and piledriving beats, and this CD is chock full of the stuff. There are a few slower, rootsy, or overly metal cuts (e.g., "Fish Song" and "Laughter"), but overall this can be recommended for its undeniable hard-drinkin' and top-down cruisin' potential. (JB)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



3.5

PISS DRUNKS

"Alcoholocaust" CD

Punk Rock!! Every once in a while a record just grabs you and pulls you in. This is one such record. Aggressive, powerful, and sometimes humorous, "Alcoholocaust" is a diverse look at desperation, fucking, positive change, and of course... drinking. The PISS DRUNKS play the type of uptempo old school punk with a genuine rock 'n' roll influence that never gets boring. It's too bad this band has called it quits, because their live shows were incredible. (KC) 5

(RANSOM NOTE—P.O. Box 40164—BELLEVUE, WA 98015)



5

PLUNGERS

"Here are..." 7" EP

Japanese female-fronted garage rock in the same vein as ACCELL 4 or ROOM 41. Overall, pretty snotty garage-punk with raspy vocals. "Little Dreamer" and "Trigger" stand out as the hard-hitters on this EP, but nothing gets me especially hot. (JW)

(INTENSIVE SCARE—P.O. Box 640338—SAN JOSE, CA 95164)



2.5

POSERS

"Worse than Nothing" 7" EP

Rough-hewn uptempo Canuck punk with growling vocals and occasional slower bridges. At times the music unfortunately verges on thrash, but the distorted guitars and aggro singing pack quite a wallop. Contains a rippin' cover of the EFFIGIES' "Body Bag", along with three originals. (JB)

(DINK—P.O. Box 27813—WASHINGTON, DC 20038)



3

PROBLEMATICS

"The Kids All Suck" LP/CD

The PROBLEMATICS were an excellent 77ish garage punk group based in Indiana, and this "retrospective" LP contains both older material and more recently recorded but equally fetching tracks. Most of their originals are crude, loud, not real fast, and satirical (like "I Guess I'm Not Cool Enough for You"), but they also include covers of old chestnuts by the GIZMOS, ZERO BOYS, and UNDERTONES. Cool obnoxious vocals prevail throughout, and these days the title song perfectly mirrors my own sentiments. (JB) 4

(RIP OFF—581 MAPLE AVENUE—SAN BRUNO, CA 94066)



5

THE PROCESS

"End Times" CD

Hard driving punk rock that's very reminiscent of the DWARVES in their "Young And Good Looking" era. As you would expect from such comparisons these guys are pretty "evil", and hence sing about killing hippies, how guns are better than grrls, why they are fat and ugly and suffering, and similar topics that pop up regularly at family reunion dinners. Actually, this is surprisingly tight, well produced, and rocking. (RK)

(INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH—2824 REGATTA BLVD—RICHMOND, CA 94804)



3

RADON "28" LP

A damn good record. There's lots of good stuff going on here, but not much I can compare it to. They have intricate guitar work like FUGAZI, and a VELVET UNDERGROUND lyrical approach (without the drug subtexts). On some of the rockers there's even a hint of the BOUNCING SOULS' ability to produce powerful singalongs. Definitely a record to check out, and the first 550 come in super cool radioactive green. (JC)

(NO IDEA—P.O. Box 14636—GAINESVILLE, FL 32604)



3

RANDUMBS

"Back From Sonoma" 7" EP

You gotta have guts, or be from Sonoma, to rip off an ANGRY SAMOANS cover. This EP contains four uptempo street punk anthems played with panache. If you're into the BLANKS 77, check this out. You'll forget what you thought you knew. (BAM)

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94144)



4

REAL ESTATE FRAUD

"It's Funny 'Cause it's True" 7" EP

This EP is kind of hokey looking, so it's not something I would normally have picked up on my own. Thankfully I got to review it, since it turned out that they have an interesting older punk sound that is not really related to any scene. They remind me of a URINALS or SACCHERINE TRUST type of band, but with a little country twist. (JC)

(NICE AND NEAT—P.O. Box 14177—MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55414)



3

RECEIVERS

"Drop Out" 7" EP

This is some of the most intelligent punk I've heard in quite some time. J-CHURCH meet the KINKS, and even the BUZZCOCKS cover they do fits their style perfectly. Three brilliant tracks can be found on this slab, so score one for Cheetahs Records. (BAM)

(CHEETAHS—P.O. Box 4442—BERKELEY, CA 94704)



3

REDUCERS S.F.

"Don't Like You/Situations" 45

Snappy Oi with nice melodic guitar riffs. Strangely enough, the lead vocals on this 45 don't sound nearly as gruff as they do when the band plays live.

"Don't Like You" is an appealing song here due to its toe-tappin' chorus, whereas the B side is a good SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS cover. However, this single doesn't quite capture the REDUCERS' hard-edged live attack. (JB)

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94114)



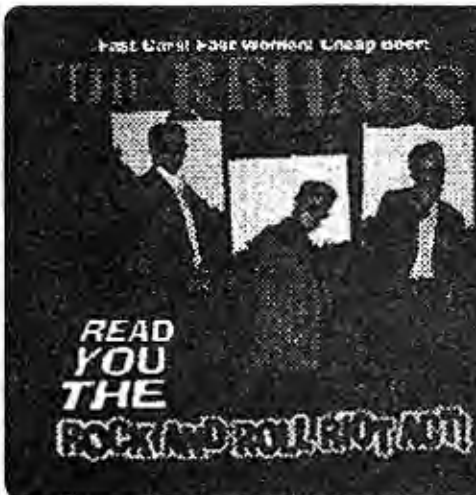
2.5

REHABS

"Read You The Rock And Roll Riot Act" CD

Surprisingly, this isn't too bad. Fourteen tracks of heavily-countrified garage rock 'n' roll. These guys are reminiscent of Crypt rockers BANTAM ROOSTER or the REVELATORS, except they aren't quite so raw and have way more of a country twang to 'em. This vaguely reminds me of the THE DEVIL DOGS, albeit not that good. (JW)

(JUST ADD WATER—P.O. Box 16102—SPARTANBURG, SC 29316)



2.5

REINA AVEJA

"Bee Complex" 7" EP

Thank goodness for Probe Records. What do you know, there are tits on the cover. Imagine

if the Cookie Monster was a pissed off metal chick singing for old BLACK SABBATH. Super heavy! (JC)

(PROBE—P.O. Box 5068—PLEASANTON, CA 94566)



3

ROLLER

"South Bound And Down" CD

Unfortunately the late 90's have seen way too many bands that rip off the DWARVES, ZEKE, the SUPERSUCKERS, and MOTORHEAD. ROLLER is at the forefront of this "movement", with EL DIABLO trailing not far behind. Twelve tracks of totally re-hashed crap. Maybe I'm too jaded, but I always thought that a little bit of originality should be involved in songwriting even if you are gonna "borrow" riffs or wear your influences on your sleeves. Anyhow, if you like your rock completely unoriginal and totally predictable, then this is for you! (JW) 1

(STEAMROLLER 88—P.O. Box 720381—DALLAS, TX 75372)

1

SCHLONG/ONE EYE OPEN

split LP

SCHLONG were one of the most underrated bands around, kind of VICTIMS FAMILY meets the DEAD MILK-MEN. ONE EYE OPEN are in the same category and at times dork out even harder. The high points are O.E.O.'s take on Jim Carroll's "People Who Died" and SCHLONG's whole side. (JC)

(VERY SMALL—P.O. Box 85534—LAS VEGAS, NV 89185)



2.5

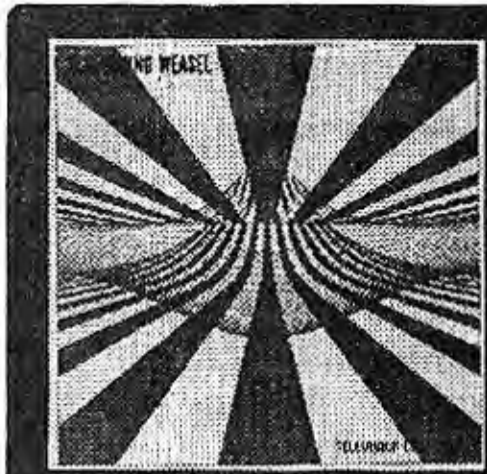
SCREECHING WEASEL

"Television City Dream" CD

Since I've lost most of my tolerance for pop punk in the wake of GREEN DAY and the lame-o "East Bay sound", I wasn't expecting to like this much. To my surprise I discovered several very

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catchy songs, such as "Speed of Mutation", "Dummy Up", and "Outside of You". Lyrically, the high points are the bitterly self-critical "We Are The Generation X" and the hilarious couplet in "Breaking Point"—"why don't you gossip about Martina Hingis/you can rhyme her name with cunnilingus". Ben remains Ben, but now he's backed by a new SW lineup. (JB) 2.5



(FAT—P.O. Box 7—SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94111)

2.5

SELLOUTS

"Hey Mofol Wanna Puke like Milton" 45

A bang-up debut by a frenetic Brazilian garage punk band on one of the best new punk labels. Blasting guitars, psychotic sandpaper vocals, and lots of velocity propel both tracks, which are much more intense than the norm for this particular subgenre of punk. It must be the water in Sao Paulo. (JB) 4.5



(RAPID PULSE—P.O. Box 5075—MILFORD, CT 06460)

4.5

SERVOTRON

"Entertainment Program For Humans (Second Variety)" CD

If you liked DEVO and you love schticky live bands that dress up in goofy outfits and act like aliens from outer space, you'll love this. (KB) 2.5 stars



(LOOKOUT—P.O. Box 20721—BERKELEY, CA 94712)

2.5

SHATTERED FAITH

"1982" CD

Amazing punk in the melodic early 80s Orange County style, not unlike the ADOLESCENTS. This album is a live recording, which I usually hate, but both the production and the songs are great. The band members went on to join current groups like EL CENTRO, the PUSHERS, and the U.S. BOMBS. In my opinion this band blows all those others away, but I'm sure the average brainwashed, trendy, and media-influenced 'punk' will pass this up in favor of those newer bands. Your loss. (BAM) 4

(GTA—501 W. GLENOAKS BLVD, SUITE 313—GLENDALE, CA 91202)



4

SHOWCASE

SHOWDOWN/TWERPS 8" split EP

The TWERPS are insane. Cross the DEAD KENNEDYS, the CHIPMUNKS, and the WORLD INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, and you'll end up with the most annoying yet beautiful punk rock music. SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN are more standard punk fare, kicking out four tunes in a fast snotty old school style. Not bad. (CP) 3.5

(702—P.O. Box 204—RENO, NV 89504)



3.5

16

"Scott Case (Out Of Print Material)" CD

This is a fine collection of noisy, nasty, muscular hate-rock, a la PACHINKO. Thanks to the distorted vocals, I can't understand a goddamn thing the singer is shouting about, but I've never been too big on lyrics. The rhythm section chugs along at a nice 80 miles an hour and even the more stoner rock infused songs ("Apollo Creed") are steeped in speedy, amphetamine fueled crunchiness. (KB) 3 stars

(PESSIMISER—P.O. Box 1070—HERMOSA BEACH, CA 90254)



3.5

SLAB

"Reflect" CD

The good: catchy, non-offensive SoCal punk. The bad: who wants to hear punk that is inoffensive and generic? The ugly: I can't recommend it, but if you're eleven years old and from Orange County it might help you get into punk. (GL)

(?)



SLOPPY SECONDS

"More Trouble Than They're Worth" LP/CD

Snotty ass pop punk with lyrics so far out there that you'll flip. This is a masterpiece. I don't think it's quite as good as their first LP "Destroyed", but it kicks the shit out of "Knock Your Block Off", their second album. If you're into the VINDICTIVES, or music of that sort, this is just for you. (BAM) 4

(NITRO—7071 WARNER AVE, SUITE F-736—HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92647)



4

SPLASH 4

"Filth City" CD EP

One of the better new garage punk releases. The SPLASH 4 contain a couple of former members of the NO TALENTS, a French SUPERCHARGER-inspired outfit, but this time around they manage to overcome the trebly sound of their previous band by coming up with a much heavier bass-heavy mix that adds considerable power to their snot-nosed attack. All the rawness remains, but is now delivered with a lot more oomph. "Know-It-All Doll" is clearly the standout track, although "Keep Your Hands Off My Babe" is almost as good. (JB) 3.5

(ESTRUS—P.O. Box 2126—BELLINGHAM, WA 98227)



3.5

SMACK

"Criminal" 7" EP

A five-track compilation EP from Finland's notoriously drunk glam punks. The title song represents SMACK at their in-your-face mid-tempo best, with its sneering vocals, catchy guitar riffing, and heavy drum sound. "Little Cunt" is almost up to the same high standard, and the live STOOGES cover also has its moments. The other cuts are more pedestrian and metal-influenced, although a pint of vodka would no doubt do wonders for them. (JB) 2.5



(MUNSTER—P.O. Box 18107—28080 MADRID—SPAIN)

2.5

SMUGGLERS

"Growing up Smuggler" CD

The good: I wanted to hate this, since it has everything going against it. For one thing it's live, and for another it's the SMUGGLERS, who have always been a little too wimpy for me. But on rare occasions a live record can make a wimpy band sound smokin', and this is harder than they've ever sounded. The bad: with 20 tracks, it's too fucking long. The ugly: if you're a SMUGGLERS fan, you should have this. (GL)



(LOOKOUT—P.O. Box 11374—BERKELEY, CA 94712)

2.5

SNUBNOSE

"Watchin' You" CD

From the ultra-boring first track, "Watchin' You", to the heavily REVEREND HORTON HEAT-influenced "Chicken Squawk", SNUBNOSE continues down the road of mediocrity. Their songs, which feature banal chord progressions with slightly metal "ballad" stylings, are not only tedious but annoying to listen to. "Grey" is an especially horrible track, slow, grating, and in general painful. (JW) 1.0



(SIN CITY—P.O. Box 8345—BERKELEY, CA 94707)

1

SODA POP FUCK YOU

"Timing Is Everything" CD

It's a bit tricky trying to describe this release. At its best it is very reminiscent of TILT at their finest, exhibiting a similar level of poise, precision, and clarity of voice (due in no small part to the excellent female vocals). Throw in some ska stylings and some off-kilter GANG OF FOUR, and hopefully you'll have a better idea of what it sounds like. The more eclectic songs unfortunately tend to wander off on a tangent too much. Intelligent lyrics round off a fine, if somewhat patchy release. (RK)



[NO ADDRESS]

2.5

SPOONBENDER

"Sender/Receiver" CD

File this under "Experimental... sort of." Fifty-five percent of this release consists of instrumentals, but then there are songs like "Stopwatch Static," a little guy/girl duet with some nice little electronic treatments. I was left wishing I could tune out the vocals and the drum tracks. "Slow Metal Fires" is the best ambient/soundtracky sounding song, since it evolves into a good ear-splitting electronic squeal. Even that wasn't enough to salvage the rest of this release for me, though. (KB)



(GSL—P.O. Box 11794—BERKELEY, CA 94712)

3

SPUNK

"Atomizer" CD EP

If LOVE BATTERY decided to be a pop punk band, sporting backwards baseball caps, they would sound a lot like SPUNK. Every track on this EP just oozes mediocrity, from the lame harmonies to the punk-by-numbers musicianship. Actually, SPUNK sound more like a



REVIEWS

poor imitation of SEAWEED. (KB) 1.5 stars
(CRACK—PO Box 29048—EATON PLACE—WINNIPEG, CANADA R3C 4L1)

1.5

SQUIDBOY

"Illiterati" CD

Finally, a real fucking ROCK record. These guys must be amazing live, because this is a great record. Brings to mind the best parts of MULE and RFTC. The vocals are hollered, the guitars rock out, and the drummer sounds like he is beating the shit out of his kit. The songs are great too, by the way. Highly recommended. (CP)



(ALLIED—P.O. Box 460683—SF, CA 94146)

4

STARLITE DESPERATION

"Show You What a Baby Won't" LP/CD

Long-playing debut from these kids. Somewhere along the lines of the STOOGES or TELEVISION, with a old school bluesy influence. Conjures up images of cigarettes and dank, dimly lit shows where you sneak in booze and sniff glue afterwards. It's dirty, raw and would make Keith Richards a proud papa after repeated listens. (CP) 3.5



(GSL—P.O. Box 11794—BERKELEY, CA 94712)

3.5

SUBVERSIVES

"Right To Riot" 7"

Pretty tuff Oi/street punk a la SKREWDRIVER or maybe even INFA RIOT, with a touch of BLANKS '77 thrown in for good measure. Vocals reminiscent of Ian



SHITLIST

Stuart. Tons of singalong, anthemic choruses. The only thing I can do without is the affected English accent. Either way, this record is tops; on side B, "Scrapheap Youth" is a great song with catchy leads and CLASH-type guitar stylings. (JW)

(VULTURE ROCK—P.O. Box 40104—ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)

4

SUBWAY THUGS "Mainstream Crap" 7" EP

A four-track Oi release out of Vancouver. A couple of the songs are especially catchy and memorable ("Frustration" and "Subway Thugs"), and I really like the sparse-sounding lead guitar breaks, but overall the EP suffers somewhat from a lack of distortion on the guitars and an occasionally sloppy rhythm section. It's a good record, but a bit more oomph and grit would make it even better. (JB) 2

(DINK—P.O. Box 27813—WASHINGTON, DC 20038-7813)

2

SUMMER SUNS "She's My Kinda Girl" 10" EP

Power pop just isn't my thing, so I'm really not that qualified to say much about this record. However, if you like music with extremely sappy vocals, basically no guitar, and absolutely no balls, then this record is for you. Eight tracks of whiny pop drivel that, in general, makes me wanna puke. ARGHHHHH! (JW) 1.0

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

1

SWINGIN' UTTERS "Five Lessons Learned" CD

Musically speaking, this is the best UTTERS album so far. Rockers like "Five Lessons Learned", "Good People", and "New Day Rising" are in the vein of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS or SOCIAL DISTORTION. More instrumentally diverse songs like "A Promise To Distinction" and "This

Bastard's Life" will no doubt bring comparisons to THE POGUES or X. Hardcore fans of the band, who are expecting the same sound as their previous records might be turned off by the experimentation, but I think it's great. The only problem I have with this is that Johnny Peebucks doesn't ever really cut loose with his singing; he just kind of stays in the pocket. Cool crime scene photos. (JC) 4

(FAT—P.O. Box 193690—SF, CA 94119)

4

SWINGIN' UTTERS "The Sounds Wrong" EP

Get out the fire extinguisher, because this fucker burns. If you've only started listening to the UTTERS after the "Juvenile" era, you ain't heard shit! This disk, a reissue of the original pressing on IFA, reflects what the UTTERS were really all about, and along with "Streets Of S.F." it made these boys the kings of Bay Area streetpunk!! I don't think Fat should get the credit for this release, but you can bet your sorry ass that they'll reap the rewards. (IR)

(FAT—P.O. Box 460144—SF, CA 94146)

TALK IS POISON "Right to Die" CD

Another fine Prank release! The TALK IS POISON pedigree goes as follows: DEAD AND GONE, COP OUT, ANIMAL FARM, and BLACK FORK. Lyrically, they cover familiar territory—lots of spleen-purg-ing angst, the futility of life, and feelings of isolation, but the rhythm section is what makes this band stand out. The bass playing is awesome, and the kick-you-in-your-fucking-teeth drumming will knock you on your ass. They're even ten times more powerful live. The only problem with this disc is that it leaves you wanting more. (KB) 4

(PRANK—P.O. Box 410892—SF, CA 94141)

4

TEDIO BOYS "Go Country" 7" EP

The TEDIO BOYS get extra points right off the top for printing "Fuck The Beatles" right on their front cover. Their music is above-average, spastic garage cow-punk that's pretty much fun. (JC) 3

(ELEVATOR MUSIC—P.O. Box 1502—NEW HAVEN, CT 06505)

3

TEMPLARS "Dans les Catacombes du Studio de l'Acre, 1993-1995" LP/CD

A collection of songs drawn from early TEMPLARS 45s and EPs, as well as other compilations. Not surprisingly, it contains a plethora of Oi anthems from one of NYC's most influential skin bands, including classics such as "Skinheads Alright", "The Sixties are Over", and "Victim", not to mention well-chosen IRON CROSS and ANGELIC UPSTARTS covers. In short, a must-have release for all you Oi boys and street punks. (JB) 4

(VULTURE ROCK—P.O. Box 40104—ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)

4

10-96 "Catastrophe" 7" EP

Pretty cool hard-core band, with shades of FEAR. I hear the singer has died, which sucks since they probably had a good future ahead of them. (JC)

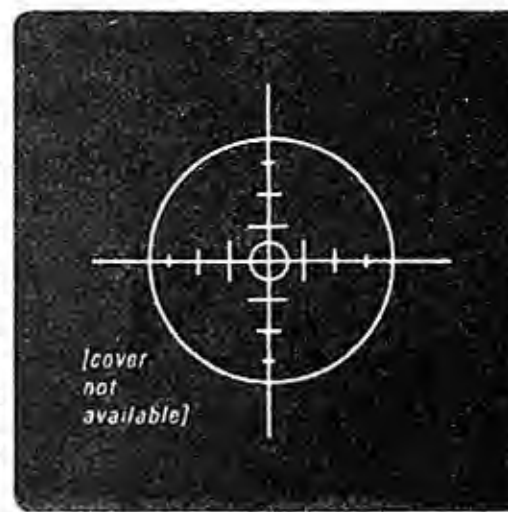
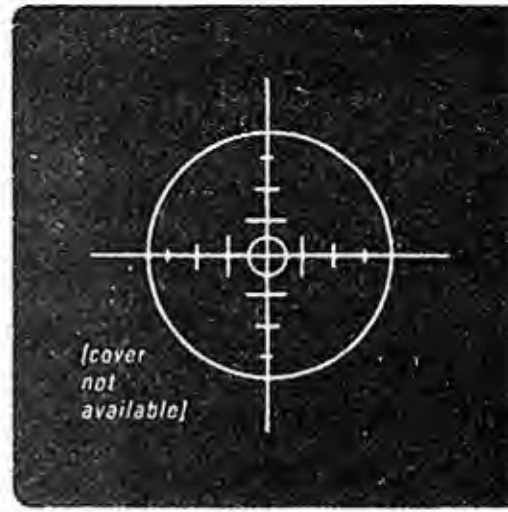
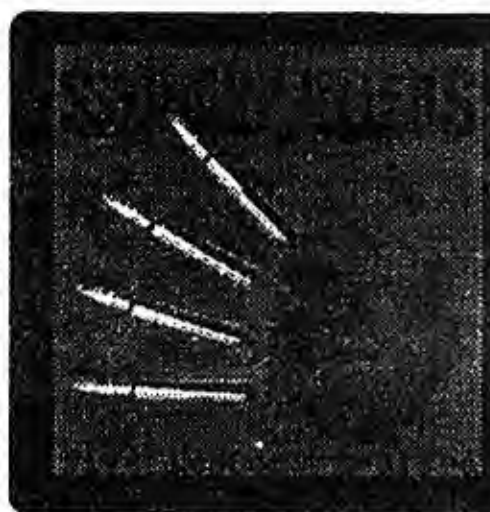
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(BEER CITY—P.O. Box 26035—MILWAUKEE, WI 53226)

3

TERRIFYING EXPERIENCE 7"

The thing that's terrifying about this is that it's lame, boring, indie-rock crap. Wimpy guitars,



weedy vocals, and no punch at all. The fact that an ex-member of GUIDED BY VOICES is in this band didn't help much. (JC) 1



(SOUTHERN—P.O. Box 577375—CHICAGO, IL 60657)

1

THEE S.T.P./BINGO
7" split EP

Two Italian bands share this EP. THEE S.T.P. are a 60s-influenced punk outfit, both of whose songs have strong choruses and lots of punch. BINGO, a band that greatly impressed me at a live show in Rome in 12/98, have a garagey 77 punk sound which is showcased to best effect on the poppier "I Don't Wanna Go Out". Don't miss out on this. (JB) 4

(RAPID PULSE—P.O. Box 5075—MILFORD, CT 06460)

4

THUMBS
"Make America Strong" LP/CD

Fuck, Yeah! Maryland! First off I have to say that I have a personal prejudice against any band that makes lyrical references to the Internet, but I was



able to overcome my bigotry because this release is pretty darn good. The CD delivers 12 cuts that reminded me of DAG NASTY, later HUSKER DU, and SAMIAM. Interestingly diverse lyrics delivered with layered vocals and inventive melodies by dual singers. (JP)

(SODA JERK—P.O. Box 4056—BOULDER, CO 80306)

TILT
"Collect 'Em All" LP/CD

Do I really need to tell you about TILT, son? If you don't know, here it is. Catchy, three-chord punk graced by Cinder's awesome voice and perceptive lyrics about everything from cops to the patriarchal hierarchy. Damn, this is my first

time reviewing, and I find that I like almost everything. I promise I'll trash every release next issue. (JP) 3



(FAT—P.O. Box 193690—SF, CA 94119)

3

13 FRIGHTENED GIRLS
"Smoke This and Walk/Splash 1" 45

The A-side is an ace uptempo 60s-influenced punker with nice loud guitars, snotty vocals, and a memorable hook. Phew! On the flip, the band displays a more reflective, "sensitive" side, but again manages to come up with a great tune that sticks in your craw. Recommended. (JB) 4

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



4

30 SECONDS OVER TOKYO
"All Ages Pie Eating Contest" 7" EP

Good energy. Tight, quick singalong punk lying somewhere between A.F.I. and F.Y.P., but not as good as either. But they get an A+ for having a classic song called "Urban Commando". (JC) 3

(BEER CITY—P.O. Box 26035—MILWAUKEE, WI 53226)



3

TITANS
"Wild Guy" 10" EP

The TITANS are reminiscent of the DUKES OF HAMBURG, except not as 60's influenced. Basically, these guys and a gal specialize in what seems to be garage rock 'n' roll with a bit of a country flava. This shit might have gotten my foot-a-tappin' a



REVIEWS

few years ago, when it actually came out, but now I need something a bit more exciting to really kick me in the ass. (JW) 2.0

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

2

TONYSTARK
"High Tech-Low Life" CD EP

The only thing cool about this band is that they are named after Iron Man's alter ego. The music sounds like radio-friendly, corporate, "alternative", mainstream bullshit. I think the singer's main influence is probably Don Dokken. Go out and buy this if you like stuff that totally sucks. (KC) 1

(RESURRECTION A.D.—P.O. Box 763—RED BANK, NJ 07701)



1

TOTALITÄR
"Klas Inte Ras" 7" EP

Heavy, heavy, hardcore punk in the well-known Swedish style. Pretty fucking intense. (JC) 4



(PRANK—P.O. Box 410892—SF, CA 94141)

4

TRUENTS
"Don't Look Back/Just Don't Tell" 45

Melodic punk from this NYC-based band. Although "Don't Look Back" is a decent song, the lead vocals are rather bland and neither track is hummable or belligerent enough to stand out amidst the flood of current vinyl. Not a knock-out, technical or otherwise. (JB) 2

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94114)



2

SHITLIST

TURBONEGRO "Apocalypse Dudes" CD

A devastating synthesis of punk raunch, hard rock riffing, pop melodies, and metal crunch. Norway's recently dissolved kings of trash pull off another



astounding feat by providing us with yet another LP's worth of killer rock 'n' roll characterized by a super-heavy production that practically blows out the speakers, a piledriving rhythm section, blazing twin guitars, hooks big enough to hang your jockstrap on, and hilarious lyrics. Have a listen to songs like "Selfdestructo Bust" and "Rock Against Ass", and you'll immediately join the ranks of the Turbo Jugend and begin sporting those little Nazi-style leather boy hats. (JB)

(MAN'S RUIN—620 22ND STREET #302—SF, CA 94114)

5

UBANGIS "Lovesick" 7" EP

7ers like this one are what being a record collecting geek is all about. Get Hip saves another great record from obscurity. Low-fi, tongue-in-cheek rockabilly.



The B-side is a messed up cover of "Helter Skelter". (JC)

(GET HIP—P.O. Box 666—CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

4

UFO DICTATORZ "Kastrat Guitar" 7" EP

The UFO DICTATORZ are one of the new wave of "old school" Italian punk bands. The title song is a great raw mid-tempo punker with a headshakin' chorus and raunch guitars. The two songs on the flip aren't so memorable, though they're no less sloppy and



primitive. Live these guys are probably a blast. (JB)

(KRAKATOA—C/O MATTEO DONDA—VIA ANFOSSI 36—20135 MILAN—ITALY)

3

UNITED BLOOD/ PRESSURE POINT split 45

UNITED BLOOD starts this record off with "Crossfire". The vocals get a bit annoying, but the guitar leads are top-notch. PRESSURE POINT's "Police On My Back" is a pretty typical anti-cop song. "Boots n' Booze" is also an anthemic singalong, but seems more appropriate when someone is about to eat ten pairs of steel-toed oxbloods. (JW)



(COLDFRONT—P.O. Box 8345—BERKELEY, CA 94707)

3.5

UPSETS "Tommy Gun Heart" 7" EP

Chunky mid-tempo 77 punk rawk with tasty lead breaks, gruff vocals, and singalong choruses. The killer title song is undoubtedly the best cut, but the others are no slouches, either. Definitely a keeper. (JB)



(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94114)

4

U.S. BOMBS/BRISTLES split 45

A keeper. The U.S. BOMBS have never managed to fully capture their live power on record, but "Breaks My Heart" comes pretty close due to its heavy rockin' sound, melodic guitar fills, and aggressive yet plaintive singing. The BRISTLES have a lighter guitar sound, but compensate for this with good



hooks, snot-nosed vocals, and nice singalong parts. The best of the recent releases on Beer City. (JB) 4

(BEER CITY—P.O. Box 26035—MILWAUKEE, WI 53226)

4

VARIOUS ARTISTS "A World Full of Friends: Best of Repent Records, Vol.2" LP

Features tracks by the FRUSTRATIONS, the KNOCKOFFS, the HOOKERS and more bands that begin with "The." In case you don't know already, this LP contains high octane trashy garage rock. Highlights for me included the KNOCKOFFS, BOU SOU NEZUMI, and the HOOKERS. (CP)



(REPENT, NO ADDRESS)

3

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Classicos del Rock & Roll Mexicano" LP

An album's worth of often bizarre Mexican r'n'r, ranging from somewhat silly 60s originals and covers of Anglo-American rock classics (including "Pushin' Too Hard", "Wild Thing", "You Really Got Me", "Steppin' Stone", and "Do You Love Me") to more recent punk offerings. There are a few songs that have a genuinely rockin' appeal, such as those by LOS OXFORDS and LOS YAPS, but by and large this is a novelty record, albeit a sometimes entertaining one. (JB)



(BOOTLEG)

2

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Denver vs Phoenix" CD

Compilations are always a hit-and-miss affair. But if this is in any way representative, the melodic, hard-driving variety of punk is alive and kicking



in these two cities. This compilation gets 4 stars on the strength of the PINHEAD CIRCUS track alone, a work of genius that could easily be the best track on a JAWBREAKER greatest hits anthology. Other standouts include the GAMITS, the FAMILY MEN, the SUBSTITUTES, MANDINGO, and the PRAGMATICS, but there isn't a duff track here. (RK)

(BLUE MOON—2075 SOUTH UNIVERSITY BLVD #264—DENVER, CO 80210)

4

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Four Two Pudding, 1989-1993" CD

Listening to this disc is like hanging out with old friends. It's a re-release of a retrospective comp spanning five years of Very Small Record's fine



releases. This is a must-have for you punk rock Johnny-come-latelies, or for you losers who lost your original pressing of the 7"ers, 10"ers, and LPs that these songs were originally culled from. The photos are almost worth your hard-earned dough alone, although I could have lived without seeing Ben Weasel's little weasel. The music ranges from anthemic punk (23 MORE MINUTES) to classic pop punk (SCREECHING WEASEL's "I Wanna be a Homosexual") to stoner-sludge (SLEEP), and the high points are ECONOCHRIST, SAMIAM, SLEEP, and LOGICAL NONSENSE. (KB)

(VERY SMALL—P.O. Box 12839—GAINESVILLE, FL 32604)

4

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Going After Pussy" CD

If you're stupid—if you're not sure about this, assume that you are—or just generally uninformed, then this CD could be your saving grace. From the first track



(ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN's "Electrify Me") to the last track ("Mainline" by ZEKE), this Junk compilation is pretty much an encyclopedia of the finest contemporary garage punk. Even if it cost \$15, I would say it was mandatory, but luckily for you it's priced at \$5. You'll also get a small taste of Katin's crazy life from the phone messages inserted between a few of the tunes. (BAM)

(JUNK FUCKIN' RECORDS—P.O. Box 1474—CYPRESS, CA 90630)

4.5

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Hang Ten, Vol. 1" CD

Here's a surf comp that made me want to go to sleep instead of to the beach. Most of this disc is boring pop punk crap from the likes of the QUEERS, the



McRACKINS, and J CHURCH, to name only a few. Songs from bands like CUB, HELEN LOVE, and the KUNG FU MONKEYS grated on my nerves so much with their cheesy sweetness that I wanted to die. The instrumental surf jams on this collection had no fire or emotion; Dick Dale this ain't! The only saving grace is the MAN OR ASTROMAN song, but I've heard them rock harder as well. Not very recommendable to diehard surf music fans. (KC)

(AMERICAN POP PROJECT—P.O. Box 2271—SAN RAFAEL, CA 94912)

4

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Hot Curly Weener" CD

Young, loud and snotty. Recess slaps you upside the head with their best (and worst). High points are the DWARVES (duh), QUINCY PUNX, F.Y.P., and the



CRIMINALS. Low points are the CRUMBS, who sound like they really want to be the QUEERS on this one, and PUD, who need to get rid of all their OP IVY records. Some gems and some crap, but with 30 songs (including a previously unreleased DWARVES song) for \$3, it's definitely worth getting. (JC)

(RECESS—P.O. Box 1112—TORRANCE, CA 90505)

4

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Maximum Freakbeat" CD

Without a doubt the best of the current crop of UK "freakbeat" comps. Freakbeat is guitar-heavy WHO-style beat music laced with fuzzed out, psychotic breaks,



and the selections here amply justify the cover blurb about "feedback, fuzz, distortion, and mayhem". This is chock full of terrific tracks, includ-

ing those by the RED SQUARES, the LEE KINGS, Australia's MISSING LINKS, the WHEELS, the GAME, and Iceland's THOR'S HAMMER, but none can quite compare with WIMPLE WINCH's amazing "Save My Soul". This is one of the best rock 'n' roll songs I've ever heard, with its sultry verses and catchy choruses that suddenly explode into mind-boggling punked-out rave ups. (JB)

(NO ADDRESS, UK)

5

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"New Frontier" CD

Thirty bands from Colorado appear on this comp, which I consider to be a very hit-or-miss affair. There are standout songs by ALL and ARMCHAIR MARTIAN, but the



track of the day award goes to the almighty WRETCH LIKE ME. Twenty nine of these cuts only appear here, and it's probably worth getting for the WRETCH track alone. (BAM)

(SODA JERK—P.O. Box 4056—BOULDER, CO 80306)

2.5

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Nobody to Love" LP/CD

One of the best releases in Tim Warren's new Teenage Shutdown series. This one is devoted to 60's "folk punk", i.e., folk rock from the garage. Imagine a more primitive version of the BYRDS and early TURTLES, coupled with dollops of adolescent angst, and you'll get the picture. Herein one can find killer originals with raw, jangling guitars and plaintive vocals by the INTRUDERS, the ILLUSIONS, the PARADOX, the GO-BETWEENS, and the PARAGONS, decent covers of LOVE and TURTLES songs, and other appealing but less noteworthy tracks. (JB) 4

(TEENAGE SHUTDOWN—C/O CRYPT—1250 LONG BEACH AVENUE #101—LA, CA 90021)

4

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Oi, Let's Go...Canada!" LP

Refreshing new Oi/streetpunk comp containing both Anglo- and Franco-Canadian bands. The songs range from powerful fist-shaking anthems

SHITLIST

with the requisite gravel voices or soccer choruses by SHOCK TROOPS, TROUBLEMAKER, IMPACT, and the DOLE, to more generic and less memorable offer-

ings by HAMMERLOCK and BITTER GRIN. Most of the tracks in between are above today's usual standards for this type of beer-guzzling he-man music. An apt comparison would be the fine "Chaos en France" skunk comps of the mid-1980's, which is no mean feat. (JB)

(RHYTHM & BOOTS—P.O. Box 4623—MAIN POSTAL OUTLET—VANCOUVER, BC V6B 4A1—CANADA)



3.5

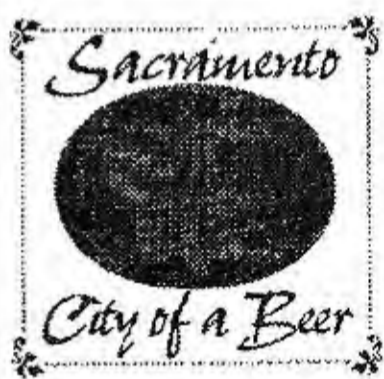
VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Sacramento, City Of A Beer" 7" EP

With six bands (the BANANAS, NAR, KARATE PARTY, the TRANSPLANTS, and LOS HUEVOS), fans of this type of music might think they

are getting their money's worth, but think again. It wasn't until I looked at the liner notes that I realized that I wasn't listening to the music of just one band. The energy is there in spades, but every band sounds identical! I know clean recording techniques are not important to the genre, but this is beyond the normally trebly, fuzzed out, gritty sound one hears on today's "garage" recordings. (KB)

(MOONLALA—1114 21ST STREET—SACRAMENTO, CA 95814)



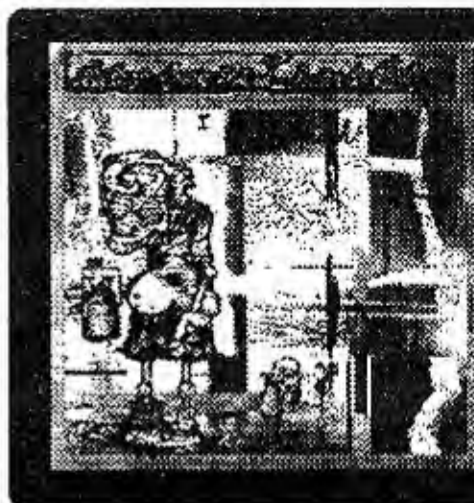
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VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Tales From The Liver's Edge" double LP

This is the ultimate drinking comp, the drinking comp to end all drinking comps. 43 bands share their own unique views on being fucked up.

The music runs the gamut of punk styles, with the addition of lots of country. Some of the best of the blotto are the



SILLIES, ELMER, LESS THAN JAKE, SCHLONG, PISS 'N' VINEGAR, MELT BANANA, and LOPEZ. There are also running samples from your favorite drunken movie stars. But the really amazing part is the packaging—it's a beautiful job with several flaps of great original art and lots of cool stuff inside. You need to see it to appreciate it. (JC) 4

(VERY SMALL—P.O. Box 85534—LAS VEGAS, NV 89185)

3.5

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"World Class Punk" CD

A CD reissue of the original 1984 ROIR cassette, which showcased 27 bands from 25 countries. Back in those days punk was an incredibly broad church, with

a huge array of styles all happily encompassed within its fold. '84 was pre-metal (DISCHARGE and C.O.C. were just starting to cross over), pre-BAD RELIGION's "Suffer", pre-SCREECHING WEASEL, and pre-emo, so you won't find any of that stuff here. It was also a lot more political. There are some familiar names here, including the BASTARDS, MOTTEK, DEZERTER, and BGK, alongside the relatively obscure. The concept and principles behind the project are more outstanding than the music itself, but this is a valuable rerelease nonetheless. (RK)

(ROIR—611 BROADWAY, SUITE 411—NY, NY 10012)



4

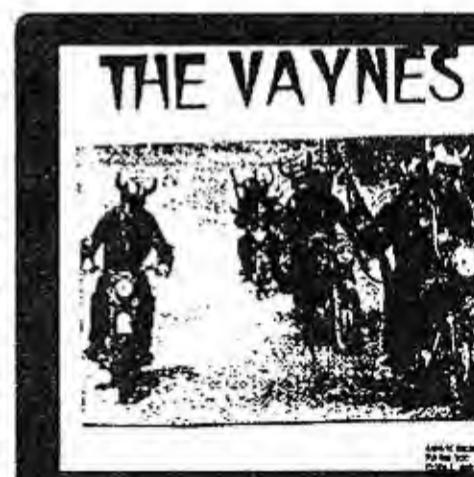
VAYNES/PSYCHEDELICS

7" split EP

The PSY-CHODELICS' probably had a lot of fun recording this, but it's not much fun to listen to. Super bad recordings by a bunch of crazy kids,

plus funny lyrics and a decent fucked-up version of "Ballroom Blitz". The VAYNES are like their older rocker brothers, kind of like the NEW BOMB TURKS on bad bathtub crank. (JC)

(FANATIC—P.O. Box 9021—PEORIA, IL 61612)



2

VENDETTAS

"Can't Stop" CD

The good: I was ready to slam this baby, but to my surprise it rocks in a 60s vein. The sound is

reminiscent of the old 60s NY art scene, but with a 90s slant. The bad: 16 songs, enough said. The ugly: get it, they look good and it smokes. (GL)

(TWIST—P.O. Box 9367—DENVER, CO 80209)



VIOLENT DRUNKS/MOLOKO MEN

7" split EP

Living in depressing backwaters like California's Central Valley would be enough to drive anyone to exasperation, if not drink. The question is whether one responds by wising up or wallowing in stupidity, and on this outing the results aren't encouraging. Fresno's VIOLENT DRUNKS and Visalia's MOLOKO MEN both churn out catchy, aggressive Oi anthems which unfortunately glorify mindless gang violence despite the anti-Nazi symbolism of the Oink label. Musically, the MOLOKO MEN have a heavier sound, and "Hooligan Army" is a particularly irresistible shitkicker. (JB) 3

(OINK—P.O. Box 27813—WASHINGTON, DC 20038)



3

VOODOO GLOW SKULLS

"Band Geek Mafia" LP/CD

Hmm...hardcore with horns and a vague inkling of supercharged skank. We've heard it before, you've heard it before, VGS has done it before.

If you liked this band before, you'll probably still like them; if you hated them before, well, you'll probably still hate them. They do have that certain mariachi-band-on-a-mixture-of-Drain-O-and-speed *je ne sais quois*, yet it might all be a bit too much of a blur for the music's own good. For some of you, that might be a good thing, but not for me, unless I drink too much. (DG)

(EPITAPH—2798 SUNSET BOULEVARD—LA, CA 90026)



2.5

WESTON/DOC HOPPER
"The Stepchildren Of Rock" CD

A live set from each band, recorded in 97 and 95, respectively. The sound quality is pretty good, but as with most live records I suspect that this would



appeal primarily to the already converted. I myself was a convert many years ago. WESTON always play alot harder and faster live, without sacrificing any of the harmonies and guitar intricacies, which might be a tad surprising to the fools that have written them off as just another indie rock band. They fucking rock. DOC HOPPER turn in another DESCENDENTS-inspired set of varied pop punk tuneage. (RK)

(GO-KART—P.O. Box 20—PRINCE ST. STATION—NY, NY 10012)

4

WHIPPERSNAPPER
"America's Favorite Pastime" CD

A relatively new band from Santa Barbara that owe alot to their neighbors LAG-WAGON. They share the same by now patented SoCal melodic



hardcore approach, excellent production, a thick full sound, and impeccable playing. There's nothing on here that pushes forward the boundaries of that particular style, but if you dig it you'll have nothing to complain about with this. (RK)

(LOBSTER—P.O. Box 1473—SANTA BARBARA, CA 93102)

2.5

WHITE TRASH DEBUTANTES
"Rock On, Sister Friends" 7" EP

This record is pretty horrible. "Teenage Alcoholic" is what I believe to be a bastardization of the VKTMS' song, and the cover of MOTORHEAD's "Eat the Rich" is even more horrible. It sounds like Ms. Coyote is basically reading the lyrics over the music. Painful. (JW)



(BEER CITY—P.O. Box 26035—MILWAUKEE, WI 53226)

1

WORKIN' STIFFS
"Liquid Courage" CD

Anyone pining away for the old SWINGIN' UTTERS sound should look no further than this new WORKIN' STIFFS LP to get a dose of crunchy sin-



glong street punk. I don't know whether it's ex-UTTER Kevin's bass playing and songwriting, or simply the fact that they've slowed their previously faster tempo down enough to appeal to old codgers like me, but I like this band more now than I used to. The emotive lead vocals are a strong point, and tracks like "Bugs, Bigots, and Bastards", "Notes from the Sandbox", and "One More Day" are real jack-the-lad foot-stompers. (JB)

(TKO—4104 24TH STREET #103—SF, CA 94114)

3.5

WRETCH LIKE ME
"New Ways To Fall" CD

From Fort Collins, Colorado, seemingly the new bastion of hard-hitting pop-punk, WRETCH LIKE ME ventures forth into our sub-conscious with that patented Blasting



Room sound liberally dosed with a helping of the best of "My War"-era BLACK FLAG. In fact, if 1983-era Flag were actually Time Lords and travelled to Fort Collins in 1998 to record at the Blasting Room, thin Bill Stevenson meeting up with fat Bill Stevenson, the result wouldn't sound too far from this. I mean that in the best possible way, since this record positively rocks. All this and two Bill Stevensons in the same place at the same time—talk about your quests for ALL... (DG)

(OWNED & OPERATED—P.O. Box 36—FORT COLLINS, CO 80522)

4

YOUNG LOSERS
"That's It/Striking Out" 45

A good primitivo-punk release out of Texas which displays the usual Rip Off trademarks, including snotty vocals, satirical lyrics, and no real lead guitar breaks. The better of the two songs is the slower, mid-tempo "Striking Out", which concerns a fairly common male problem. (JB)

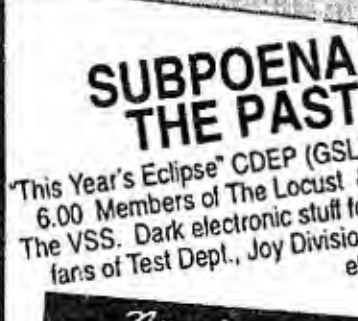
(RIP OFF—581 MAPLE AVENUE—SAN BRUNO, CA 94066)

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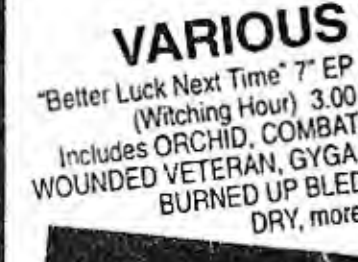
Bottleneck



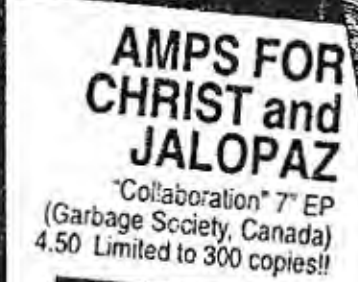
!!!
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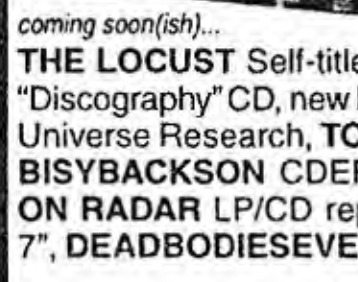
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coming soon(ish)...
 THE LOCUST Self-titled CD, CRIMSON CURSE "Discography" CD, new BOBBYTEENS 7" on Outer Universe Research, TOMSK-7 / IDI AMIN Split 7", BISYBACKSON CDEP, UNHINGED CD, ARAB ON RADAR LP/CD repress, DEVOID OF FAITH 7", DEADBODIESEVERYWHERE LP, lots more...

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In memory of Hugh O'Neill

of the Queers

On Wednesday, January 20, 1999, Hugh O'Neill passed away in Massachusetts. He'd been battling a brain tumor for some time and unfortunately the tumor proved to be too much. Hugh had been in many bands, but the Queers, who he played with for over ten years off and on and added his rock-solid drumming to, is the one for which he is most well-known. This guy was the real deal, one who loved to Rock and Roll! An excellent drummer and a great person, he'll be sorely missed by many.

— B-Face



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